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GEORGIA

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GAME & FISH



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GEORGIA

GAME & FISH

OCTOBER 1966
Volume I Number I

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A New Voice for Wildlife Conservation

Dreams do come true... yes, Georgia, now there is a Game and Fish Commission magazine.

For quite a long time, now, the dream has been confined to the minds of several people. For a dream to become a reality, a great deal of action must take place... action, effort and just plain hard work.

The names of some of these people appear on this page in the lefthand column, but many others too numerous to name here deserve equal credit. These are the men often described as "sportsmen" who provide the backbone of the wildlife conservation movement in Georgia, whether they are members of an organized group or not.

These people felt strongly that the Game and Fish Commission needed a stronger and more effective voice for communicating to the sportsmen it serves. We believe that too, and we pledge to do our best through these pages to accomplish this.

It is the purpose of this magazine to keep its readers informed of the wildlife conservation activities of the Georgia Game and Fish Commission to secure public support for and cooperation with these programs. We intend to help increase the enjoyment which sportsmen receive from hunting, fishing and boating by furnishing current, accurate information on the best methods, locations, and times to participate in their favorite outdoor sports. We want to "shorten the time between bites," and help hunters find their quarry, without endangering the safety of the participants or the future of Georgia's wildlife resources, which will need even greater protection and development in the face of a rapidly expanding population.

To give everyone an opportunity to see what we have to offer and what we plan to do with our new magazine, the first four issues will be made available free of charge. Beginning with the issue of February, 1967, readers may continue to receive the publication for a small subscription fee of \$1 for one year, or \$2.50 for three years. This small token fee will be used to help cover the expense of handling and mailing. "Georgia Outdoors," the free monthly newsletter of the Game and Fish Commission for the past three years, has been permanently discontinued. We hope that you will like its successor well enough to subscribe for a full three year period.

* * *

Deer Story—In this issue you'll find the story in pictures and words of Georgia's growing deer herd—how it came about, where it can be found, and how to hunt it.

In future issues, we'll concentrate on other popular Georgia game species, including the bobwhite quail, doves, rabbits, and squirrels. For the fisherman, we'll have articles throughout the year like the one in this issue on fall fishing. During the spring and summer when there's little or nothing to hunt, we'll concentrate on fishing. Stick with us. It's going to be an interesting year.

J.M.

On the Cover—Breaking for cover, a whitetail buck, Georgia's most prized big game animal, presents a target few hunters can resist. Photo by Jim Morrison.

Photo Credits: Hubert Handy 8 and 9; Dan Keever 1, 6, b. r. 7, 13, 14, 15; Jim Morrison 2, 3, 4, 5, b. l. 7, b. r. and b. l. 9, t. and b. r. 11, 12; Jim Tyler c. 9.

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The big moment is at hand for this hunter, as he draws a fine bead on a dandy buck in Georgia's forest lands. There's better hunting for everyone this year.

THE YEAR OF THE DEER

Chances of getting a deer are better for more
Georgia hunters, thanks to a continually growing herd

By Dean Wohlgemuth Did you get your buck last year? If not, don't give up hope. There's probably a better chance you'll bag your venison this season.

For several years now, Georgia's deer hunting trend has been one of improvement. The state's deer herd is getting bigger each year, and chances are better for a hunter to get his game.

"Overall, the deer population is increasing gradually, and so the number of deer killed also increases," said Hubert Handy, coordinator of game management for the Game and Fish Commission. "We should have a better season than last year," he said.

Deer season is about a week later in opening this year than it has been in the



It's a chore to get your buck out of the woods, but have you ever heard anyone complain about it? These hunters don't mind the task a bit.



past. The reason for this is that Commission experts believe the later opening will allow the season to better coincide with the rutting, or mating season of deer. This should increase the crop of deer produced next spring.

Additionally, deer hunting is usually better during the rut, since bucks become more aggressive and less cautious when seeking a mate. And visibility in the woods is better later when more leaves fall off the trees. All this is advantageous to the hunter.

So this year, most sections of the state will herald in the deer season on Nov. 5. In northern and middle sections, the season will continue through Nov. 28. In southwest Georgia, the season will remain open through Jan. 5. Coastal counties, in southeast Georgia, will be the first to open with the dates of the season there running from Oct. 29 through Jan. 5.

As usual, the William Tells will have their season first with the bow and arrow clan taking to the woods in search for a deer from Oct. 1 through Oct. 29 in all counties that are open for the gun season.

Complete details on seasons and open counties can be found in the Sportsman's Calendar, just inside the back cover of this magazine.

In outlining deer populations in various areas of the state, and pinpointing hotspots for the coming season, Handy said the Piedmont or Central Section of Georgia has probably the largest deer herd.

"Putnam, Jones, Morgan, Jasper, Monroe, McDuffie and Greene counties have the largest deer herd in the state and there should be very fine hunting in that area," said Handy. Because of the large deer crop, one day of either-ex hunting will be allowed on the final day of the season in Jasper, Jones, Monroe, Putnam and McDuffie counties.

Another area that is expected to produce good hunting is around Columbus-Stewart, Chattahoochee, Muscogee and Marion counties.

Directly across the state from Columbus to the east, the area around Augusta and Clark Hill Reservoir will yield good sport for deer hunters.

"There is a good deer herd all up and down the Savannah River," said Handy. "If we could eliminate all the wild dogs that chase deer in that area, we could have a lot better herd here."

Bulloch, Screven and Jenkins counties should be among the best counties



The youngsters get into the act too, like 14-year-old David Pettigrew of Forsyth in Monroe County. Each year, more and more youngsters as well as adult hunters try their hand at hunting deer—and a good number of them get their bucks.

in that area. Also, in the Fort Stewart area, game is plentiful.

Coastal counties will also put venison on a lot of hunters' dinner tables.

National Forest lands in the mountains of north Georgia which are open to public hunting during the open deer season, will account for their share of deer kills by Peach State sportsmen. Lumpkin, White, Towns, Union and Rabun counties all should produce very fine hunting.

Deer hunting should rate at least fair in northwest Georgia, said Handy. "You can't say it will be 'good,' but it will be at least fair. The herd there is not as large as in northeast Georgia."

The only section of the state showing a decline in its deer population is the southwest corner, according to Handy, apparently because of over hunting in some sections. Because of a slightly lower population, southwest Georgia will likely produce less deer to hunters this season.

Management areas will also continue their trend over recent years to provide better and better hunting.



Adding to the excitement and atmosphere of the hunt is the deer camp. Such camps spring up all over Georgia when the season opens. More than 100,000 Georgians hunted deer last year, and even more are expected this season.



Still Hunting?



Stalking?

No matter how you hunt you can
get your deer if you remember to

Keep your eye on the deer trails

By Richard W. Whittington

The native range of the whitetail deer is the largest of any single big game species in the United States. Its popularity to hunters nationwide can be attributed to this fact. Certainly you could say it is the most popular big game animal in Georgia. Of all the game animals in this state, the whitetail deer is spreading at the fastest rate. They are simply popping up in places that have had no deer since the late 1800's. Changing land use has created excellent deer range and has greatly accelerated the rate of spread. Total coverage of the state by our deer herd is possible within the next decade.

Whitetail hunting takes on a variety



Some unsuccessful deer hunters say that deer hunting is 90 per cent luck, five per cent picking the right location, and five per cent being able to hit your target.

However, deer hunting statistics show that normally, only 10 per cent of the hunters bag 100 per cent of the deer year after year. Why?

The deer are there. While deer hunting may not be a bona fide mystery, an understanding of the techniques and "tricks" is just about essential to a successful hunt.

Dick Whittington, supervisor of game management in the Game and Fish Commission's middle Georgia region office at Fort Valley, is a man who knows deer and how to hunt them. He has seldom failed to bag his limit hunting in both Georgia and South Carolina with bow and arrow, shotgun, and rifle. During the past season, he bagged two bucks in 15 minutes. He spends a great deal of his time in the deer woods throughout the year in his duties as a game biologist. In this article, he passes on some good advice to other Georgia sportsmen.

ing?

of forms which are largely determined by the type of terrain, local customs and regulations. Mountain and Piedmont sections of Georgia are usually still-hunted while the Coastal Plains are still-hunted and drive-hunted with and without dogs. Both methods have their merit, but still-hunting is growing in popularity even in the traditional dog-hunting sections.

Knowledge of the country is valuable in determining where and how to hunt in an area effectively and is equally important to prevent becoming lost. Pre-hunt scouting trips give the hunter an advantage in knowing the general direction of deer movements to and from feeding areas and the exact areas which

are being used heavily. Deer will use the same feeding area day after day, but they will seldom bed in the same spot on consecutive days.

Some fundamental knowledge of deer habits is important in tracing their movements. In addition to feeding at night, deer feed mostly in early morning and late evening. They eat a variety of leaves, twigs, shrubs, weeds and fruits. An especially tasty fruit is acorns from almost any species of oak. A heavy acorn crop will concentrate deer and provide some excellent hunting.

Feeding movements are apt to begin at daybreak and end by mid-morning and then start again a short time before

dark. It is good strategy to do a considerable amount of sitting and watching a feeding area during these two periods. Any trails leading to the feeding area should be located and consideration given to the wind direction before choosing a stand since these trails will be used by deer coming to the feeding area in most cases. Tree stands are very effective, but not essential. This type of hunting is called still-hunting.

Another productive method of hunting is to sit on a trail or at the junction of two or more trails and intercept the deer moving to or from feeding or bedding areas. The area to sit should be open enough to shoot without interfer-

ence since the deer will probably be moving at a steady walk. Always check the wind and be careful not to step in the trail the deer will travel. Human scent will remain for several hours under dry conditions and considerably longer if the ground and vegetation are wet. Deer have a very keen sense of smell and will spook quite easily at human scent.

Stalking deer is a form of still-hunting since the hunter is motionless a great deal of the time. Sneaking along the edges of creek bottoms and hollows, always walking into the wind, and standing still frequently to look and listen will often reveal a deer that is unaware of your presence. Continuous walking produces noise that is not natural and will spook most deer before the hunter is ready for a shot. Stalking is best in fairly dense cover since the hunter would be detected quite easily walking in the open.

Drive-hunts are conducted by hunters walking through large areas of dense cover which deer normally bed or feed. The object is for the "drivers" to flush the deer into sight of the "standers." The standers should be positioned on fire-breaks, deer trails, logging roads or in natural openings which will give them the clearest view of any approaching deer. The drivers should be in a long line across the area to be driven with the hunters on each end of the line slightly ahead of the others in order to detect any deer trying to sneak around the

edge of the line. Drivers or standers should be a safe distance from the hunter on either side.

Both noisy and quiet drives are used. A noisy drive tends to stir up deer and often the standers get only running shots. The quiet drive tends to move deer to the standers slowly so that a walking or standing shot is presented. The drive should move downwind if possible to prevent the deer from scenting the standers.

Dog-hunting for whitetails where legally allowed in South Georgia is popular in sections with very dense cover. A hunt may be conducted in much the same manner as a drive-hunt with the exception that dogs are used for driving the deer. In some instances small areas are completely surrounded by standers. Positioning of the hunters on each existing deer trail is important since many deer will use them as escape routes.

Another method of dog-hunting widely accepted is using natural barriers such as lakes or streams to guide the chased deer through a line of standers. These barriers tend to turn the deer in the desired direction; however, hard pressed deer will frequently swim to elude the dogs.

Weather conditions determine, to a great extent, the amount of movement by deer during the daylight hours. Deer feed heavily immediately before a cold front regardless of the time of day. Another peak period of movement is fol-

lowing rain. With either of these conditions prevailing, the hunter should remain on his stand or continue stalking through the entire day. Weather conditions are not nearly so critical in drive hunting.

In extremely cold weather, deer will frequently seek sheltered areas from the wind. The south side of slopes or mountains are good bets to find deer sunning themselves during the middle of the day. Contrary to popular belief, deer get cold and seek the sunny areas for warmth. Movement is high throughout the day in this type weather.

Choosing the weapon for hunting whitetails is a matter of personal preference. Weapons commonly used are bow and arrow, rifle and shotgun. Any of these are adequate providing the hunter knows the limitations of the particular weapon. The effectiveness of the bow and arrow is determined by the position of the hit and the ability of the hunter to trail the deer. Any legal bow, which must have a pull of more than 40 pounds, that is properly used will do very well on white tails.

The shotgun with buckshot has a large limitation which is badly abused by hunters. Unfortunately, few people realize how close deer must be for buckshot to kill effectively. The range at which a particular gun will consistently put five pellets on a deer size target is the effective range of the gun. The shotgun with rifled slugs is a very good killer at much greater ranges than with buckshot.

Any legal caliber rifle will effectively kill deer provided the shot is placed correctly. Any shot from the last rib forward to the head should do the job unless the deer is only "nicked." Neck and head shots are spectacular killers, but they will frequently ruin a trophy head for mounting. If the hunter is not sure of himself, he should aim for the ribs or shoulder and squeeze off the shot.

Needless to say, it's a good safety idea to wear a red, yellow or orange hat or coat while deer hunting. Be sure you have clearly identified your target before pulling the trigger. Don't make "sound" shots.

The identification of a legally antlered buck is very important to the hunter. In many instances a deer may be identified as a doe unless it has a large rack. The use of binoculars or a scope will aid the hunter in inspecting each deer closely. A large group of deer will usually be does and fawns. Any deer following the group at a distance could be a buck trailing one of the group. The hunter should be suspicious of any deer traveling alone. This may be the trophy buck he has waited a lifetime for.

Deer hunting with a bow and arrow is becoming increasingly popular in Georgia. Last year, more than 8,000 archers hunted deer of both sexes during October.



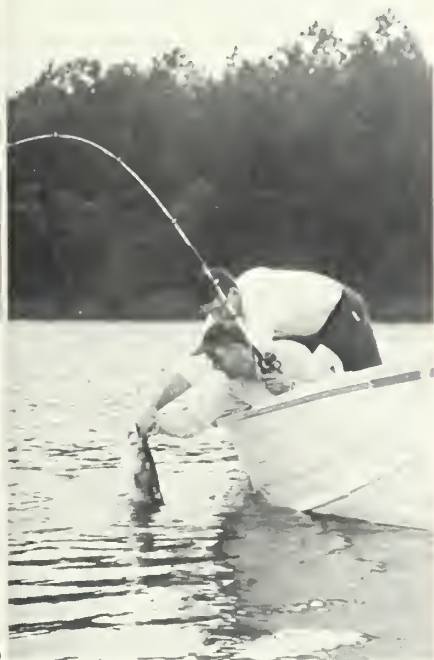
A big bass, all green and white and black, whacking a stout fishing pole silly ... in October? ... just doesn't ring true. October is for birds on wing, puffs of shotgun smoke, and the solid belt in the shoulder of Mr. 12 gauge.

And then November ... a saltwater living fish called a trout, pulling with autumn vigor against the baited line he so foolishly fell for ... again, it doesn't seem quite right. November blurts in with deer ghosting through trees and a thousand human eyes looking for the prize raek.

The gist of this little calendar game is to point out a fishy fact. Fishing is great in Georgia in the fall! In fact sometimes better than that wonderful spring fishing.

Game and Fish Commission creel reports show that many times, fall anglers pull in more fish than spring anglers. Probably the same people, though. If a guy is going to pull them in like crazy in the spring, he will probably give a repeat performance in the fall. Or will he? Rip the August page off the calendar and many fishing rods are stashed and whole bevvies of guns are dug out of storage. Fishing follows the migrating birds.

Not all outdoorsmen are so speedy about storing the tackle box. They linger on. Some handily combine morning fishing and afternoon shooting. A day of dove shooting and fishing, anyone? Or they will utilize the lulls in fishing to whack a few birds with buckshot.



There are plenty of fish to go around in the autumn, with less competition on the waters. You're sure to get more and bigger fish than you did during hot weather.

fall is for hunting...

This is also the happy season for some of the seasoned anglers. They like to see hunting season come — just to thin the ranks of fish catchers. Water skiers also dwindle away. "Tough break!"

Fishing is good in the fall for the simple fact that the fish start hitting again. Why? Water temperature. It cools, naturally. And as the water temperature slides down the Fahrenheit scale, fish shake their summer sluggishness, and start feeding with vigor.

Need proof? In the large lakes, bass fishing is par excellence in late October,

November, and the first part of December. Allatoona creel records show October is the high bass month for the entire year. Rubbing shoulders with both South Carolina and Georgia, Clark Hill Reservoir has crappie fishing at its best in November. It's this way for most waters throughout the state. Usually one or more popular fish is the bitingest in the fall.

Not to be left out of this excellent autumn fishing, Georgia streams and rivers make good showings. Mountain streams flow low and clear and fish congregate in pools. Trout get an added treat this year. In the past, streams have closed on Sept. 15. This year closing is scheduled for Oct. 15, a whole month's reprieve.

Down south, in the Suwannee, fall fishing might even be a shade better than spring angling. The Alapaha River lowers and clears, and chain pickerel (or jack) fishing is tops.

Coastal fishing has its fall champions. Where only a few large channel bass are caught during the warmer months, the bigger channel bass move inshore and concentrate off the beaches and in the mouths of inlets, during October and November. And that old phoney trout, the speckled sea trout, which is really a weakfish, finds his way to more creels, stringers, or ice boxes, during the fall season.

Now, suggestions are as plentiful as fleas on a mangy mutt. But remember. Fall is for hunting — yet, fishing is great, too.

...usually!

**don't overlook
the excellent fishing
available in
autumn!**

by Jim Tyler



You'll find action aplenty, but don't expect to land them all. The big ones start hitting when the weather begins to cool down and whet the appetites of all fish.



Photo Credit: Hubert Handy

Deer stocking was an important factor in getting Georgia's deer herd on the road to return. Now, deer are found in all of Georgia's 159 counties, with a hunting season in 85 counties.

a crop to be harvested

More deer for
Georgians through
better management

By Jim Tyler

Picture 100,000 deer feasting hungrily throughout the forests of Georgia. Each year a new crop of fawns raises the number by 30,000. Deer, deer and more deer. This sounds great to the hunter. And if this were all there was to it, it would be great—we would have an abundance of deer. But wait a minute.

Actually Georgia does have about 100,000 deer within its borders. Good healthy deer. Yet this great number of deer needs plenty of food to be healthy, to function properly, and to reproduce. This is one of the catches of a big deer herd. Food. Good nutritious food. Deer have to be managed so there are not too many for the available food supply.

To do this, to keep a balance between deer and food, crowded deer can sometimes be moved to different areas where food is plentiful. Or they can be harvested by hunting.

Let's go back a bit. In the late 1800's Georgia didn't have to worry a whit about too many deer in certain areas. There weren't any wild deer in north Georgia. In south Georgia, deer were found on the coastal islands and a few were scattered throughout the plantation lands, but hunting was almost nil.

People for years had taken deer with no limits, no seasons, no nothing. They literally exterminated the deer population. North Georgia was, therefore, devoid of deer by the late 1890's. In fact, the last known north Georgia deer of this era was run down and killed by dogs in 1895 in Fannin County. Probably some deer were present, but in scant numbers.

In 1928, a deer stocking program was initiated by the U.S. Forest Service. Deer were moved from Pisgah National Forest in North Carolina to north Georgia. With this start, deer were again in north Georgia.

In the next three years the State Game and Fish Commission transplanted another 100 deer and the Forest Service brought in about 50 more. As this small number multiplied, several were trapped and moved to other suitable areas throughout the state. The first legal deer hunt from this scanty beginning was in 1940. The whitetails were back.

But Hubert Handy, coordinator of game management for the State Game and Fish Commission, says "a problem shows up with a deer population that



Wildlife rangers play one of the most important roles in deer management. Control of illegal hunting and free running dogs are two of the biggest current problems in Georgia deer management.

Food patches on game management areas are just one of many techniques used to increase the deer and turkey population. Control of the harvest by hunters is the most important.

Carefully watched-over management areas not only provide excellent hunting, they also helped to form a nucleus for the big rebuilding job across the state.



isn't managed. It never gets off the ground when hounded by poachers and dogs. It just stays about so, never really getting any larger. Deer have to be managed."

To combat this, the Commission began establishing wildlife management areas in 1938. The original idea behind the areas was that they would provide a center point where deer could be watched over and dogs kept out. The deer would flourish and spread out. The idea didn't pan out. Outside the protected areas, dogs slaughtered them.

Deer just can't shake dogs from their trail unless they can get in water to lose their trail of scent. In hilly or mountain areas, a deer will keep circling a mountain on the same contour until he is finally exhausted and at the mercy of dogs. Dogs give no mercy.

Because the deer were not spreading out to any great extent, the Commission continued trapping deer from areas that contained too many deer for the available food and moving them to areas of abundant food. Catching a live deer is done by one of two ways. They can be lured into wooden traps baited with corn or salt, or they can be shot with a dart gun containing a tranquilizer that stuns them. Over 600 captured deer have been transplanted. But it is a slow and expensive way.

It wasn't until 1959 that the statewide



deer population was given a solid shot in the arm which took it, as Handy said, above the level where it just stayed about the same to its present level of about 100,000 deer. From 1959 to 1961, 1,000 deer were brought in from Texas and Wisconsin. With this big boost, stocked in areas of good deer habitat with no or few deer, Georgia's deer population was on its way.

Establishing out-of-state deer and restocking Georgia deer have done much to establish the deer population. It's a matter of putting the deer where the food is. No matter how you look at it, a certain amount of deer food will only support a certain amount of deer.

When the deer are stocked in areas of abundant food they still have to be watched. The critter will sometimes eat himself out of house and home. The population has to be kept at a level consistent with the amount of food the area will grow.

It is important, therefore, to keep the number of deer at a certain level. If the Commission doesn't do it by regulated hunting, nature will harvest in her own way. Disease and starvation enter the scene.

Deer management by the Commission is a delicate business. Good scientific management, that is.

But that is what managers are for—to manage. And when something unusual does appear, research is initiated to see how serious the situation is. For example, some cattlemen once thought deer carried anaplasmosis, a blood disease fatal to young cattle. They don't. But it had to be scientifically proven.

Game and Fish rangers play a vital role in the deer management picture. Law enforcement, control of free ranging dogs, and putting the grips on night slaughter of deer by poachers using spot lights are all significant factors that have caused the deer herd to spiral upward.

Without planning as such, another event has favored the deer. The agriculture trend in Georgia has changed rapidly in recent years. Farm crops are being replaced by forest stands. Over 200,000 acres are converted yearly into forest areas. This helps the deer—and the hunter.

Deer hunting will continue to increase in magnitude and the Commission hopes to see the near future usher in regulations that will open every county in the state for deer hunting.

In a way, then, the deer is a crop. And just like a crop of corn, it has to be looked after and managed. Deer managers, your State Game and Fish Commission, will probably not be able to produce more deer to the acre in the future, but will have more acres to work with. The harvesters of this bigger crop? The hunter.

meet your commissioner



The State Game and Fish Commission is a constitutional body composed of 11 members, one from each of the ten congressional districts in Georgia, plus one member from the six coastal counties.

It's members are appointed by the governor for seven year terms. Each member serves without compensation, except travel expenses to and from meetings.

In this series of articles, you will meet individually the men who represent you in the conservation and development of Georgia's wildlife resources.

Judge Harley Langdale of Valdosta, chairman of the State Game and Fish Commission, can be described as a legendary figure in his own lifetime.

Born on the edge of the Okefenokee Swamp near the Georgia-Florida line, Judge Langdale's early years were spent in the woods with his father, a turpentine farmer who killed bears and wildcats in the swamp by the score, and who fed his family on wild turkey, venison, and wild honey.

From the time the judge was 10 years old, he dipped turpentine from his father's pines, cutting cypress crossies in the depths of the swamp during the winter, when turpentine trees are dormant.

Leaving the woods behind, he obtained his law degree from Mercer University and began practicing law in Valdosta, where he was soon elected judge of the city recorder's court. He began investing every dollar he earned or could borrow to buy pine timberland, then selling for as low as dollar an acre.

Soon, he had built up a woods empire that now totals more than 175,000 acres in 11 Georgia counties and two counties in Florida, which also includes extensive farming operations.

Now one of the wealthiest men in Georgia, Judge Langdale has used his money and his influence to help his fellow men. Many a struggling South Georgia youngster has completed his college education with the judge's unpublicized help. One of his favorite projects is the Valdosta-Lowndes County Hospital Authority. As chairman, the judge attends every meeting faithfully.

President of the American Turpentine Farmers Association from its founding until recently, Judge Langdale played an important role in obtaining government stabilization of the turpentine industry, bringing prosperity to thousands of turpentine growers and their employees all over the United States.

Judge Langdale has always believed in hard work, and made no exceptions



Quail hunting is Judge Langdale's favorite pastime, along with watching his dogs work.

for his three sons, all of whom were sent to work in the turpentine woods at the age of ten, just as their father was.

The judge believes that hard work and plenty of hunting and fishing is the secret to preventing juvenile delinquency. Even when he was deeply in debt, he saw that his sons always had access to fishing tackle, shotguns, and shells. To this day, they are all avid hunters and fishermen, just as their father is.

The judge's favorite recreation is quail hunting, in a style that can be seen only in a few places in the world, mostly in the plantation area of Southwest Georgia, the "Quail Capitol of the World." During the quail season, the judge hunts his 20,000 acre private shooting grounds every day of the week, unless pressing business keeps him away.

Of his 20,000 acres of hunting land, Judge Langdale practices his most intensive quail management on about 10,000 acres, including some 5,000 acres at "Kinderlou" in Lowndes County, hunted only by the judge and guests who never forget the experience.

The Langdale Company's operations at Valdosta are centered around a 250 acre plant where 50,000 barrels of gum turpentine are processed a year, along with 100 million board feet of lumber from a sawmill and wood processing plant.





JUDGE HARLEY LANGDALE, SR.

by Jim Morrison

Judge Langdale's Valdosta office reflects his life-long devotion to hunting and fishing, which he has never neglected while building a multi-million dollar turpentine, timber business, said to use everything about a pine tree "except the shadow it casts on the ground."

Judge Langdale is one of Georgia's leading advocates of controlled burning for quail in mature pines. Divided into squares by fire lanes, his land is burned in checkerboard fashion every two years, insuring that quail can escape to a nearby unburned block while providing a diversity of habitat. In addition to burning, the judge has planted more than 100 food patches of mixed quail foods throughout the area, which concentrates the birds for easier hunting along the firebreak roads, many of which are seeded to bicolor lespediza. In areas where light cattle grazing is permitted, food patches are fenced in.

Hunters from less fortunate areas are amazed that the Judge hunts only coveys, never single birds. He never allows more than four birds to be shot in the same covey, and feels that hunting is poor if his dogs don't find more than one covey every 15 minutes. On a recent visit to "Kinderlou" by *Field & Stream* humorist Corey Ford, the day's hunt produced 21 coveys in five hours of hunting. Judge Langdale and his

longtime dog trainer, Crawford Corbett, could hardly find words to express their disappointment. "Worst hunting we ever had," said the judge. "I don't know what's wrong. We always get a covey out of that patch."

Over the past half century, the judge has worn out three 16-gauge Winchester

Formerly a great horseman, the judge at the age of 78 now prefers to drive himself around at the wheel of his Ford, watching the pine trees and quail grow.



pumps, and recently bought a 12-gauge Winchester automatic with a fiberglass barrel. In addition to quail hunting, he is an avid dove and deer hunter, and enjoys duck shooting.

The judge's deer hunting is restricted primarily to a timbered 30,000 acre tract near the Okefenokee Swamp, which also has a few turkeys, but not as many as the judge would like.

Judge Langdale is a bird dog lover of the first order. He owns at least 15 or 16 pointers at any given moment, along with a setter or two, carefully and lovingly trained by Mr. Corbett, who has served as the judge's fulltime dog trainer for more than 12 years.

Watching the dogs work is the judge's

greatest joy, and he takes a personal interest in the performance of each dog, calling him by name and recalling his most unusual covey points.

Since his appointment to the State Game and Fish Commission from the Eighth Congressional District by former Governor Ernest Vandiver in January of 1961 for a seven-year term, Judge Langdale has taken an active role in the protection and development of Georgia's wildlife resources throughout the entire state. He is a staunch believer in the importance of law enforcement and public education in protecting wildlife from poaching, out of season hunting, and over shooting. He especially detests quail trapping and alligator poaching, along with the use of illegal fish baskets in rivers and streams. He knows all of the wildlife rangers in his district personally, and follows their activities closely.

In addition to demonstrating the importance of sound biological principles in managing game and fish on his own personal hunting and fishing areas, the Judge leases some 60,000 acres of timberland free of charge to the State in the Suwannee Game Management Area, the largest public hunting area in Georgia.

Judge Langdale threw his great personal influence in full support of the recent increase in the hunting and fishing license fees to provide more funds for wildlife conservation. In addition to wildlife, the judge has always practiced and advocated soil, water, and forest conservation, and has received many honors for his conservation activities, culminated by his selection as "Conservationist of the Year" by the Georgia Sportsmen's Federation in 1964, and his election as chairman of the State Game and Fish Commission in 1966.

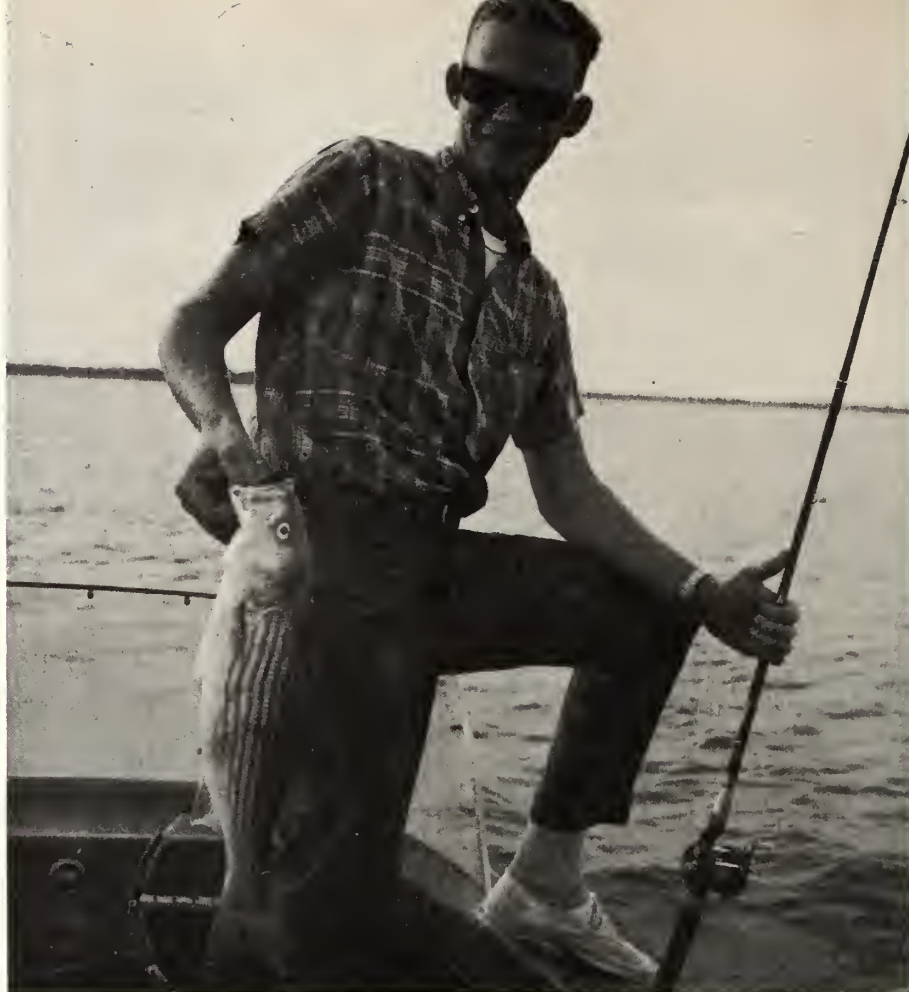


The judge does his quail hunting from a specially designed cart which is also a mobile dog pen capable of holding as many as a dozen pointers at a time.

Landlocked striped bass like those that grow up to 55 pounds in South Carolina's Santee-Cooper reservoirs may soon be a reality in Georgia lakes, thanks to the increase in the price of hunting and fishing license fees.

To Catch A Fish

by Jim Morrison



the story of the hunting and fishing license increase

It's a hot, still day on your favorite reservoir in midsummer.

Things have been pretty slow on the lake, like they always are in late July and August. Bass aren't biting, and the crappie have gone deep.

About the only action you hope for is to spot a school of white bass, while several small white birds fly lazily over your head under the blazing sun. Suddenly, they dive toward the surface of the lake. The realization hits you that fish, big fish, are tearing the calm water apart! A long slim form leaps clear of the water, diving back with a thrashing motion that sends a white spray cascading behind a glimpse of an unusually wide tailfin disappearing into the water.

With a quick yank of the starter rope and a frantic burst of speed, you gun your motor in time to see other sliver shapes, smaller in size, urgently leaping from the water, followed by more large silver torpedoes.

Casting your silver spoon into the middle of the turmoil, something big and brawny inhales your lure and heads for the other side of the lake, while the drag on your reel whines furiously!

It's a long hard struggle. He won't be "horsed" in, and running under the

boat a few times sets your heart pounding with the thought of losing the trophy fish of your life.

Finally, a long, dark shape with flaring fins is brought near the boat, the net dips behind him, and you are looking at your first landlocked Georgia striped bass!

Sound impossible? Not if the plans of the State Game and Fish Commission made possible by this year's increase in the cost of fishing licenses work out. Striped bass fishing and many other surprises for Georgia's fishermen are in Santa's sack, ready to be delivered during the next few years.

Just like any program of far reaching consequence, many of the improvements Georgia fishermen will be seeing for their extra license dollar will take time to produce, but progress is underway or on the drawing board in many areas.

The saltwater striped bass stocking program is one of the more popular projects that Georgia fishermen are rooting for. Biologists of the Game and Fish Commission are hard at work now on developing successful techniques for economically raising sub-adult size striped bass for stocking in large Georgia reservoirs.



Trout stocked in Lake Lanier less than three years ago have already reached more than seven pounds in size. Expansion of the program will allow more trout stocking in coldwater lakes.

Encouraged by the spectacular success of rainbow trout stocking in Lake Lanier even without natural reproduction, fisheries men believe that good striper fishing probably can be maintained in any large reservoir that has a heavy population of gizzard shad as food fish, provided the stripers can be raised in hatcheries in large enough numbers at a low enough cost.

Lakes which may one day feature striped bass fishing if the project is successful include Seminole, Blackshear, Worth, Walter F. George, Sinclair, Clark Hill, and Hartwell. Natural spawning of striped bass might be possible in Lake Seminole and Blackshear, but proposed dams on tributary spawning streams may doom the self-sustaining population possibility, making periodic restocking necessary to maintain striper fishing.

Another study will soon be underway to determine what can be done about increasing spawning runs of striped bass up the coastal plains rivers from the ocean, especially in the Savannah, Ogeechee, Altamaha, Satilla, and St. Mary's rivers. Research may indicate the possibility of stocking hatchery striped bass in these streams to enter the ocean and later return to spawn and be caught by fishermen, particularly in areas where pollution has almost wiped out reproduction.

Other new species of fish being groomed for stocking introductions include the northern smallmouth bass, which may be the answer for many north Georgia streams, especially in northwest Georgia, that are too cold for largemouth bass and too warm for trout.

For fast-flowing middle Georgia streams on the fall line with extensive shoal areas, Commission fish biologists are studying introduction of the Flint

River coosae bass, which is similar in size and appearance to the northern smallmouth. These fish commonly grow to five and six pounds in size, and reproduce in greater numbers than largemouth bass in streams. These fish may eventually be stocked in the Ocmulgee, Oconee, Alcovy, Towaliga, Broad, Ogeechee, and Little rivers, provided that research projects on these streams show their desirability.

Present efforts to establish walleye in the large northern reservoirs will be concentrated on Lake Allatoona, Nottely, and the new Carter's Dam reservoir, along with possible stockings further south.

How will it be possible to stock these new fish as a result of the fishing license increase? All of these programs depend on new research that must be conducted by increased technical personnel, but one of the most fundamental needs for such a program is improvement of one of the most useful and one of the most misunderstood tools of a fisheries biologist — the fish hatchery.

Although Georgia presently has eight fish hatcheries in all areas of the State, most of them were built more than 20 years ago when little was known about modern standards of hatchery construction. Because of the shortage of money in the Game and Fish Commission in recent years, little has been done to modernize most of these hatcheries since they were built. Now, with license increase money, the efficiency of these hatcheries to produce fish for experimental stocking programs such as striped bass will be greatly increased by construction renovation.

The specific things to be done to hatcheries to achieve these goals don't sound very exciting, but they are fundamental needs which can't be ignored any longer. Examples include dams built

by mule-drawn implements that don't hold water, and ponds that are almost impossible to drain and safely remove fish from them. The answer is construction of a concrete catch basin around the pond drain where fish in a drained pond can be easily seined up without muddying the water to such an extent that it kills small, immature fingerling fish.

Largemouth bass, bream, and channel catfish for new or renovated private pond stocking at a lower cost to the state will continue to be necessary, and more efficient hatcheries will fill the need.

One possible use of such hatchery pond space is rearing of threadfin shad, a small warmwater food fish, for stocking in north Georgia reservoirs too cold for the shad to survive in the winter. Brood fish stocked every spring would spawn heavily in lakes such as Burton, producing a tremendous food supply for trout, bass, and other species during the warm part of the year, which will then be eaten by the thousands as they die during cold weather that winter.

Hatchery ponds are needed for all the experimental stocking programs of the department where it is desirable to stock a slightly larger fingerling fish, especially walleye, smallmouth bass, Flint River bass, and striped bass.

Hatcheries scheduled for renovation during the next two years include Walton near Covington, Richmond Hill near Savannah, Bowen's Mill near Fitzgerald, Dawson, Cordele, and Summer-ville.

In the north Georgia trout areas, greater efforts will be made to increase the production of native stream-raised trout, rather than use of hatchery stocked trout. In some streams, dams will be built blocking the upstream mi-

Continued on Page 16

where your money's going

This "launching area" on Lake Tugalo near Clayton is typical of the poor access for fishermen to many of the state's finest fishing waters.



Under the license increase program, concrete launching ramps will be built on more than 32 major Georgia rivers and lakes which presently have no such facilities.



by Dean Wohlgemuth

BIG MEDICINE FOR BIG BUCKS

Selecting the
right deer rifle
for you

With hundreds of calibers to choose from, it's no wonder that hunters selecting their first deer rifle manage to be pretty confused.

Whether you've never hunted deer before, or you're an oldtimer that has decided it's time to turn Old Betsy out to pasture and invest in some firepower of the newer models, there's a big decision ahead of you.

There's no such thing as the perfect rifle for everyone. Each cartridge is made for a specific job. You could get 10 deer hunters together, and you'd probably get 10 answers on which caliber is best. Which one is right? In all likelihood, each one is right. They have selected the caliber that best performs what is expected of the cartridge for the man doing the trigger pulling.

Unless you're one of the blessed few who can afford a rackful of rifles, you're most likely looking for the one weapon that will serve well any purpose for which you plan to use a high-powered rifle.

So the first thing to consider in buying a rifle, is determining the use to which it will be put. We're assuming that you are looking for a gun to be used entirely — or nearly so — on deer hunting, and that your hunting will be for the most part limited to Georgia.



Once we've gotten this established, that narrows the field considerably. Obviously, your shooting will be at rather close range. Most of your shots will be through brush or timber. What you need then is a caliber that is heavy enough to be able to fight its way through the brush and still be accurate and deadly up to perhaps 150 yards. Light bullets won't stay on line as well, once they hit a few small limbs. Nor do you need a light, high velocity cartridge that will drop only three inches in 250 yards.

True, the heavier cartridge will travel much slower. This may seem that it would have less impact when it hits the deer. But a slower, heavier cartridge will not deflect as badly when it hits a few branches. Its weight still delivers shock power at lower speed, because of that weight.

Generally speaking, a good Georgia deer cartridge should have a weight in the neighborhood of 100 to 180 grains, depending on the caliber. Heavier weight is unnecessary, unless you expect to shoot through extremely heavy brush. If you go much lighter, the bullets may go astray at the first twig. It should be pointed out, however, that heavy, powerful cartridges don't make it possible to disregard brush. All bullets will be deflected some if they hit too many or too large twigs.

A velocity of between 2500 and 3000 feet per second on a bullet of 170 to 180 grains is powerful enough to put down the biggest deer you'll ever see, as long as you've hit him in a vital spot. To get more velocity, you'd have to get a lighter bullet. Then again we'd be headed back toward the fast, light bullet which would veer off target by tiny limbs more easily.

Certain calibers are outlawed in Georgia for deer hunting. Perhaps you'll hear someone tell how he's killed plenty of deer with one of these calibers, and you'll wonder why they're not allowed. Sure, you can kill with them. But the odds are heavily stacked against it. Unless your name is Davy Crockett, I wouldn't advise going bear hunting with a switch.

The deadliness of a rifle is measured in neither the speed or weight or the bullet alone, but rather in the shock power delivered by the combination of those two factors. A pedestrian hit by a bicycle at 40 miles per hour might be hurt worse than if he'd been hit by a 10-ton truck doing only two miles per hour. Yet if the truck is doing 30, and hit a man inside a car even, death would be just about certain. Going similar speeds, the heavier vehicle is certainly more deadly.

Now, let's get down to cases on which calibers are among the best choices, and

which are not. For the conditions you'll find in Georgia, these calibers are excellent: .30/06, .308, .35 Remington, 7 mm, .280 and those of similar size.

The .308, a cartridge born of recent military engagements, is a fine weapon. The .35 Remington is best when brush is extraordinarily heavy. In my opinion, the best all-around rifle for the man who wants to hunt all big game in Georgia, and has hopes of someday going out west where he may meet other conditions, would just have to be the .30/06.

If you were doing all your shooting in the wide open spaces, you couldn't do much better for deer than a .270, but all that speed and flat trajectory won't help you too much in Georgia's forests.

The .264 is much the same as the .270 in ballistics. When you get much below that, below the .25 caliber class, you've probably got a dandy little varmint rifle, but it isn't a deer gun.

The following calibers, because of their extra light weight, low velocity, and consequent low impact, are not legal for deer hunting in Georgia: .218 Bee; .22 Hornet, .22 Jet, .221 Fireball, .25-20, .256 Hawkeye, .32-20, and the .30 Caliber M-1 Army Carbine.

This M-1 Army Carbine has thrown a lot of people in Georgia for a loop. They've been offered a good price on this neat looking little rifle, and are told by some that it is legal. It is NOT!

The confusion possibly is due to the fact that the so-called M-1 Army RIFLE is legal. The difference? Quite a bit! The carbine cartridge is a short, low powered cartridge that resembles a .32 special pistol cartridge. The M-1 rifle referred to here, actually is the very potent .30/06 cartridge.

Legally, in Georgia, any cartridge of .22 caliber or more that is centerfire, with those rifles listed above excepted, may be used for deer.

More confusion. People ask is the regular little .22 rifle legal? Answer: NO! It is rimfire, not centerfire. It has very, very low velocity, weight, and impact.

Another point on legalities: rifles which meet the requirements set forth may be used for deer in all parts of the state.

By now, let us assume you've decided which caliber best suits your needs. What you need to decide next, is the style of action. Do you want a bolt, single shot, pump, lever or automatic?

A single shot may do the job, and be inexpensive. If you're convinced you're a good enough marksman that one shot is enough, take a single shot. Otherwise, rule out that choice.

I personally frown on automatics because, for one thing, a shooter is tempted to snap off too many shots too quick, rather than to take careful aim. If you

hit a deer several times, you've spoiled a lot of meat. Even then if you shoot quickly, you may leave him wounded with poorly placed shots and he'll get away.

In recent years, some very fine pumps with box magazines have been built for big game rifles, and the results appear to be excellent. The fast reloading action of a pump, without taking the shooter's eye far off the target, makes it a potent weapon that produces a great deal of firepower.

That leaves us with bolt and lever actions, the two most popular types for hunting rifles. The choice here is more personal than anything else. The bolt action is generally accepted as the strongest, most well made of all for rifles. Many large calibers can't be bought in lever action. In fact, there are relatively few calibers available in that style. If your choice comes in lever, well and good. Otherwise, you'd probably be smartest to choose a bolt action. The .30/30 is usually lever action, and the popular .308 comes in probably the widest variety of actions, including automatic, lever, bolt and if I'm not mistaken, there are even pumps made for it.

Various types of actions in which favorite deer calibers may be found: from left, automatic, bolt, lever and pump.



gration of rough fish, followed by the elimination of all trash fish in the stream above it and restocking only with trout. Dams to dig trout pools will be constructed, along with artificial spawning areas where erosion and siltation has ruined natural spawning. Cover will be planted along stream banks in the Chattahoochee National Forest to provide cooling shade and cover for trout, as well as stopping bank erosion.

For many fishermen, the most significant result they will see from their license dollars in the next year will be the boat launching ramps being constructed for fishermen on Georgia's finest fishing lakes and streams, many of which are almost unfished because of the great difficulty of launching a boat and removing it from the stream.

Under the program made possible by the license increase, the Game and Fish Commission will build a launching ramp approximately every 15 miles on 20 major streams more than 2,933 miles long, plus one ramp for every thousand acres of water not now served by a ramp in 12 private power company and T.V.A. reservoirs with a total acreage of more than 33,000 acres.

Because of the number of ramps needed and the limited amount of money available each year for ramp construction from license fees, ramps will only be constructed this year in areas where local interest in the project is strong.

first ramps. Local county or city governments must be willing to participate in the acquisition, construction, and maintenance of the areas, in order to spread out Commission funds over as many ramps as possible.

Construction of the concrete ramp itself will be done by Game and Fish Commission workers. The county will be required to build an all-weather road and parking area at the rampsite large enough to accommodate anticipated needs, and must also agree to maintain the road and parking area. The Game and Fish Commission will repair the ramp itself, if necessary. If the local government wishes, it may install other facilities on the area, including picnic tables, trash cans, fireplaces, tentsites, toilets, etc. Federal funds for this purpose are available to local governments under the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, which also pays for part of the ramp construction done by the Game and Fish Commission. Money for the Fund is obtained by entrance fees charged at federal recreation areas

At present, region managers of the Game and Fish Commission are negotiating with county officials in 42 locations which have been selected by the Commission for ramp construction, provided local support is given to the projects and a suitable site can be found. Here is a list of the projects:

Chattahoochee River above Atlanta, two ramps; Lake Nottely; Oostanaula River, two ramps; Lake Chatuge; Lake Tugalo; Etowah River; Lake Seed.

Oconee River, three ramps; Flint River, three ramps; Goat Rock Reservoir; Savannah River; Lake Oliver; Ocmulgee River, two ramps.

Flint River, four ramps; Chattahoochee River; St. Mary's River; Ocmulgee River, two ramps; Satilla River; Little River; Alapaha River, Suwanee River.

Altamaha River, two ramps; Savannah River; Ogeechee River, three ramps; Oconee River; Canoochee River; Ohoopsee River, Ocmulgee River.



Sportsman's



Calendar

SEASONS NOW OPEN

DOVES

Season—Sept. 9 through Oct. 8, 1966 and Dec. 6 through Jan. 14, 1967.

Bag Limit—12 Daily, possession limit 24.

MARSH HENS

(GALLINULES & RAILS)

Season—Sept. 15 through Nov. 23, 1966.

Bag Limit—15 Daily, possession limit 30.

SEASONS CLOSING THIS MONTH

TROUT

Open streams—Oct. 15

DOVES

First half—Oct. 8

SEASONS OPENING THIS MONTH

ARCHERY DEER SEASON

Archery Pre-Season Deer Hunt—Oct. 1, 1966 through Oct. 29, 1966 in any county or portion of a county which has an open gun season for deer hunting in the 1966-67 season.

Bag Limit—As established by counties under the gun season regulations, except that archers may take deer of either sex during this special season. During the regular season, all archers must conform to bag limits and sex regulations as established for firearm regulations. In no case may a hunter kill more than two deer during one year by any method or methods.

GUN DEER SEASON

Southeast Ga. Season—Oct. 29, 1966 through Jan. 5, 1967 in the following counties:

Brantley, Bryan, Bulloch, Burke, Camden, Candler, Charlton, Chatham, Clinch County south of the Atlantic Coastline Railroad and east of the run of Suwannee Creek, Echols County east of U. S. 129 and south of Ga. 187, Effingham, Emanuel north of U. S. 80, Evans, Glascock, Glynn, Jefferson, Jenkins, Liberty, Long, McIntosh, Pierce County south of U. S. 82 and east of Ga. 121, Screven, Tattnall, Washington and Wayne counties.

Bag Limit—Two (2) Bucks. Hunting with dogs is allowed in all of the above counties.

GROUSE, RUFFED

Season—Oct. 15, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

Bag Limit—3 Daily, possession limit 6.

SQUIRREL

Season—Oct. 15, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

Bag Limit—10 Daily.

OPPOSSUM

Season—Oct. 29, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967, Exception: Coweta County opens Oct. 1, 1966 through Jan. 21, 1967.

No Bag Limit.

RACCOON

N. Ga. Season—Oct. 29, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

Bag Limit—One (1) per night per person.

S. Ga. Season—No closed season.

No Bag Limit.

SEASONS OPENING NEXT MONTH

GUN DEER SEASON

Southwest Ga. Season—Nov. 5, 1966 through Jan. 5, 1967 in the following counties:

Baker, Calhoun, Chattahoochee, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Lee County west of U. S. 19, Marion, Mitchell, Muscogee, Seminole, Stewart, Terrell, Thomas, Webster and Worth County south of U. S. 82.

Bag Limit—Two (2) Bucks, except in Baker, Calhoun, Grady, Dougherty, and Thomas counties where the bag limit is two (2) bucks or one (1) buck and one (1) doe. Exception: The Worth County bag limit shall be one (1) buck only for the season.

Hunting with dogs will be allowed in all of the counties listed above during the season with the exception of Chattahoochee, Muscogee, and Worth counties, where hunting with dogs will be prohibited in order to prevent over-harvest of deer and to insure continued growth of the deer herd.



North and Middle Ga. Season—Nov. 5, 1966 through Nov. 28, 1966 in the following counties:

Banks County east of U. S. 441, Baldwin, Bartow County south of the Etowah River west of U. S. 41, Butts, Columbia,

Crawford County north of U. S. 80, Dawson, Fannin, Floyd County east of U. S. 27 and north of U. S. 411, Gilmer County west of U. S. 76 and southwest of Ga. 52 and southeast of the Big Creek Gap Road to the Fannin County Line, Green, Habersham County west of U. S. 23 and south of Ga. 17 south of Hollywood, Hancock, Haralson, Henry, Jasper, Jones, Lamar, Lincoln, Lumpkin, McDuffie, Monroe, Morgan, Murray, Newton, Oglethorpe County south of U. S. 78, Paulding, Polk County east of U. S. 27 and south of U. S. 278, Putnam, Rabun, Richmond, Rockdale, Schley, Stephens County south of U. S. 123 and west of Ga. 17 north of Toccoa, Talbot, Taliaferro, Towns, Union, Warren, White, Walton, Wilkinson, and Wilkes County east of Ga. 47 and south of U. S. 378.

Bag Limit—Two (2) Bucks, except that in order to harvest a bumper crop of deer, Jasper, Jones, Monroe, Putnam and McDuffie counties will be open for either-sex deer hunting on the last day of the regular season, Nov. 28, 1966, with a bag limit of no more than one (1) doe deer. The regular season bag limits will also apply during this period, provided that no gun hunter during the entire year may take more than two (2) bucks or one (1) buck and one (1) doe by any method or methods.

Deer hunting with dogs is prohibited in all of the above listed counties, and it is illegal to run, chase, or pursue deer with dogs in any of these counties.

WILD TURKEY

West Central Ga. Season—Nov. 5, 1966 through Jan. 5, 1967 in the counties of Chattahoochee, Marion, Muscogee, Stewart, and Talbot.

Bag Limit—One (1) per season.

Southwest Ga. Season—Nov. 19, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967 in the counties of Baker, Calhoun, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Miller, Mitchell, Seminole, and Thomas.

Bag Limit—Two (2) per season.

QUAIL, BOBWHITE

Season—Nov. 19, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

Bag Limit—12 Daily, possession limit 36.

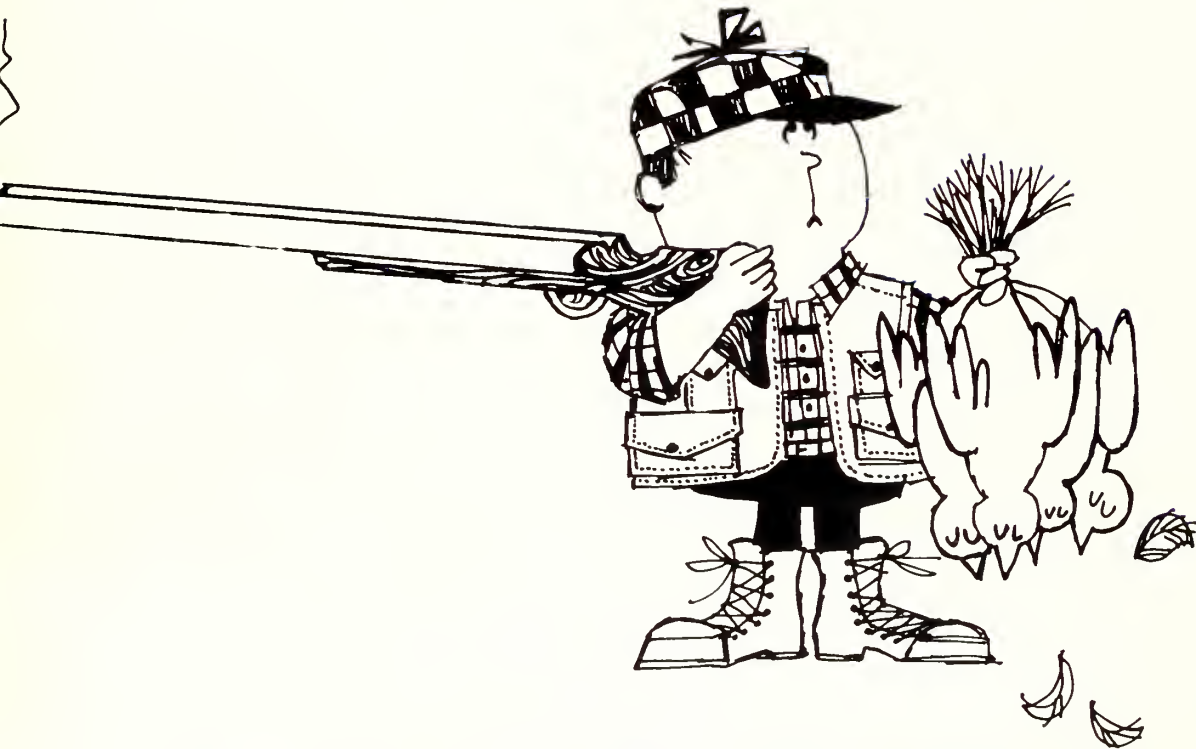
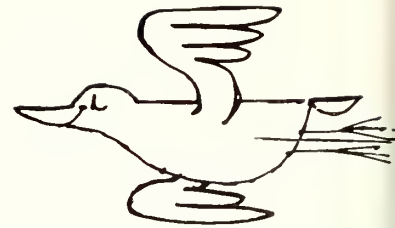
RABBITS

Season—Nov. 19, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

N. Ga. Bag Limit—5 Daily.

S. Ga. Bag Limit—10 Daily.

**FOUR
IS THE
LIMIT**



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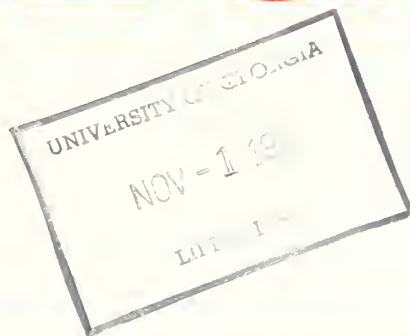
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ORGIA

VOL. 1, NO. 2 / NOVEMBER, 1966

GAME & FISH





GEORGIA GAME & FISH

NOVEMBER 1966
Volume I Number 2

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Marjorie E. Edgar, Editor	Glenn Smith, Staff Writer

Wildlife is where you find it

If there is one single lesson to be gleaned from the articles which appear in this month's issue, it probably boils down to the little understood principle that wildlife is where you find it for a very good reason, and frequently man's efforts to change nature's plans are a foolish waste of effort and money.

If this simple reason could be learned by all of the state conservation agencies in the United States, as well as by the sportsmen who pay for their programs and expect results, many dollars of the sportsmen's license money would not have gone down the drain with so little to show for it in all too many cases.

Undoubtedly, the problem is much more acute in the field of game management, where animal species cover larger and more diverse habitat areas than do fish, which are rather severely concentrated in clearly-distinguishable habitat areas.

For instance, how many petitions have you seen lately demanding that a State game and fish agency stock red snapper or sailfish in fresh water streams and lakes? That obviously would be a waste of time.

But with game animals, things aren't quite so black and white. Take the raccoon, an animal that requires extensive swamps and bottomlands to survive in numbers. For this reason, it is most populous in South Georgia where these conditions exist. Stocking it in the dry hills and mountains of North Georgia will never overcome the unsuitable habitat there, even though avid coon hunters and conservationists devoutly wish that something could be done.

Other examples can be brought forward, such as the thousands of dollars wasted every year by well meaning sportsmen who attempt to stock quail in areas which will never support a high quail population because the existing land use pattern does not produce the food and cover that quail must have to flourish.

The simple principle that game is where you find it is recognized by Georgia's game biologists. For this reason, their efforts are devoted to improving game species that are compatible geographically with the use that the land is being put to. This is the reason they have in the past frequently concentrated on deer stocking and protection as Georgia's forests rapidly grew in size.

This is the reason that they are now actively searching for a woods bird to help replace declining quail populations, since the Game and Fish Commission cannot cut the ever growing pine trees or cultivate the spreading pastures, neither of which are good quail habitat.

This is not to say that nothing can be done to preserve Georgia's magnificent quail hunting. But to more fully understand the reasons why the task is so difficult, and what can be done to slow the trend down, we recommend that you carefully read the article on the facing page about Georgia's quail hunting.

Then turn to page 10 and see what the Game and Fish Commission proposes to do about it. Your eyes may be opened. —J. M.

ON THE COVER: With a thunderous heart stopping commotion, a Georgia bobwhite quail takes to the air from under the feet of our startled hunter. There is no better illustration of why Georgia is "The Quail Capital of the World."—Photo by Dan Keever.

Photo Credits: Dan Keever 1, 4, t. 6, t. & b. r. 7, t. 10, c. 12; Jim Morrison 3, c. 6, 8, 9, c. 10, t. 1, & b. 1, 12, 14, 15, 16; John Robinson, Power Boating b. 1, 7; Glenn Smith t. r. 12; Walter Stephens 2.

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By nature a scratching ground bird, the quail depends on highly nutritious weed seeds common to fertilized cropland. Pine forests offer him little nourishment.

THE QUAIL CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

What's Happening to Georgia's Quail

By Jim Morrison

PART I

Suddenly, buzzing brown blurs filled the air through the small opening in the pines, rising so rapidly that the sound of my Sweet Sixteen exploding down the fire lane took the place of my next heartbeat, sandwiched between two loud reports from Leon's 12 gauge at my side.

Where flying shapes had appeared to draw together in a knot the moment before, now soft brown feathers gently parachuted down over the pine needles in the narrow strip.

"Dead, dead, dead, here boy, dead, dead, dead bird, here boy, dead," intoned Leon, calling his two brown and tan pointers back to the spot where the unexpected covey came up wild.

One by one, the dogs sniffed out the birds and returned them to their master — two . . . three . . . "Any more?" . . . four . . . "That's all." . . . "Wait . . . dead, dead, dead, dead bird" . . . five. Five!

Five quail on one covey rise? Good shooting, you say? Or maybe just luck?

Maybe both, but still a hunting story worth talking about . . . one of those stories the grandchildren will probably hear about "the good old days" of Georgia quail hunting.

But wait a minute. That story didn't happen in the good old days. It happened almost yesterday, last season, or the year before. It could have happened today, and it might happen again tomorrow, because Georgia still deserves the proud title of "Quail Capital of the World."

During the 1964-65 season, more than three and a third million quail were taken by an estimated 135,000 quail hunters. To average 25 birds apiece during the season, it's obvious that some fortunate hunters got their limit of 12 more than one day to make up for the kind of marksmanship most of us produce on exploding quail coveys.

It's also apparent why Georgia quail hunting has made the state famous for more than just peaches of the fruit and female variety. This kind of hunting has long been a powerful lure to hunters from all over the country from President Eisenhower on down to millionaire plantation owners and ordinary sportsmen like you and me.

Regardless of our financial background at the moment, I imagine that most of us have at least experienced the invigorating flow of fresh air through our lungs, the pleasure of watching good dogs work protective cover, and the all too brief thrill of the covey rise and a quickly aimed shot.

Of course, the quality of the quail hunting you've experienced varies plenty with where you live, or at least where you hunt. South Georgia, especially the Albany and Thomasville sections, has long held the crown in the "Quail Capital," but good quail shooting is found over the entire coastal plains and into the piedmont area of middle Georgia. Farm areas in Northwest Georgia still produce good shooting, but quail rapidly thin out with the approach of the Blue Ridge mountains.

But where you are hunting *within* these areas plays perhaps as great a

role in how good your hunting is.

Even as Leon Kirkland and I gathered fallen birds into our game pouches on that memorable Saturday afternoon hunt, we could see the evidences of future quail hunts on the same area that would probably never again produce five bagged birds on a covey rise, or 15 birds for three or four hours of hunting by two shotguns.

"That's the wild covey I told you about," Leon said. "I'm glad we got those ornery cusses. I've been trying to kill those quail all season. They won't hold for a point, and they always get up wild 200 yards in front of the dogs. We were just lucky to get a shot at 'em."

Luck indeed. Just a few more feet and the skillful flyers would have been darting through thick pine saplings higher than our heads surrounding the narrow firebreak.

As we trudged over the abandoned middle Georgia farmland, our eyes seldom failed to discover a growing army of small pine trees, springing from the once cleared fields and pastures of a small family farm.

Further back, we had passed the weathered shell of the farmhouse itself, now choked by weeds and honeysuckle vines. We carefully skirted the house and the abandoned well shaft that we knew must be nearby.

"I'm going to make a deer stand in that old house next year," chuckled Leon, an allround sportsman if there ever was one. As if to dramatically prove his point, "look at the size of that hoofprint," he suddenly exclaimed, kneeling beside the unmistakable fresh footprints of a deer across the plowed firebreak where we were hunting at the moment.

Later, hunting across a small patch of timber filled with old felled tree-tops, a large, big animal suddenly jumped up from beneath the branches of an old tree top and bounced saucily away from us, white flag waving in our surprised faces.

Resisting the impulse to shoot at the medium-sized doe, I was impressed that Leon's well-trained pointers paid the deer no attention at all, but continued busily searching the short grass borders of the woods for birds. It was clearly evident that deer hunting was probably every bit as good on the area we were hunting as quail, at least for the time being.

What Leon and I were seeing was not unique. Equally saddening sights for the avid quail hunter can be seen over the entire State of Georgia, but especially so in the middle Georgia piedmont area.

In this section of Georgia, as well as many other parts, the time of the small family farms that once covered Georgia like a patch-work quilt is gone forever, killed by machinery and modern science that now make farming largely unprofitable for all but a few large operations who can survive on high volume of production and low profits.

The plight of the small family farm is well illustrated by the story of a man who stopped in a small country store and was amazed to find the storekeeper buying eggs from local farm women for 50 cents a dozen, only to turn around and sell them to customers for 45 cents a dozen. Asked how he could make a profit that way, the storekeeper replied, "Well, it's not much, but it's a heap a sight better 'n farmin'."

The trend away from agriculture has been most pronounced in the rolling hill areas of the piedmont which are not as suited for working by machinery, as are the level fields of southwest Georgia.

The rapid drop in small family farms on a state-wide basis is startling. In 1950, there were approximately 214,000 individual farm owners in Georgia. By 1963, this figure plunged to only 106,000 owners, a 100 per cent decline.

At the same time, farm youngsters were leaving home for better jobs and a higher standard of living in the city — they hoped. Georgia is rapidly becoming industrialized, and the industries go to the people in the cities, drawing more farm youth and leaving more land uncultivated.

What is happening to the land that is no longer needed for crop production? Leon and I could readily see the most common answer — trees, usually pines, and thick, brushy areas. In most cases, the land is simply being allowed to lie idle, slowly, and naturally growing up into forests. In other cases, the change is being deliberately speeded up by landowners planting pine seedlings for pulpwood and saw timber.

During the years from 1945 through 1964, the Georgia Forestry Commission estimated that more than two million acres were planted with almost a billion and a half pine seedlings.

Each year for the past 20 years, more than 200,000 acres of open land a year have become forest land, either naturally or by seeding. This represents more than two million acres every 10 years. In 1934, there were only 21 million acres of trees in Georgia. Now, there are more than 27 million acres, leaving only about 10 million acres of open land.

PART II: December Issue



Game biologist Scott Fussell uses a drop stick to control burn an area inside a plowed firebreak on the Allatoona public hunting area. Controlled burning improves quail habitat economically.



Georgia's reputation for the world's finest quail shooting is still unchallenged.



A growing army of little pine trees all over Georgia has signaled the decline of quail hunting in many areas, as has the sharp increase in permanent pastureland used by dairy and beef cattle.



VENISON VACATION

By Dean Wohlgenuth



This wily old buck is curious about the hunter he's spied sitting out in the open in hopes a deer will come by and give him a shot. But that buck may be in for a surprise, too, when the hunter realizes he's there.



Hunting Areas of
Georgia

It's called Turkey Day, or Thanksgiving Day by everyone. To most people it means turkey on the table.

To still others, it means seeing that big football game.

But to thousands of Georgia deer hunters, not only the day but the entire week has come to be a tradition of a different sort. More and more, Georgians think of that last week of November as "deer hunting week." And if things go right early in the week, there's a good likelihood the Thanksgiving feast will be graced by venison rather than turkey.

The tradition was born out of the extra time deer hunting made available, normally on Thanksgiving week, on the many management areas operated by

the Game and Fish Commission.

Under intense care, deer populations are excellent and growing. If they were allowed to grow too large for the available food supply, the populations would dwindle because of starvation and disease. This means each year a surplus of deer must be removed. This assignment is given to the hunter. Indeed, the hunter is the reason behind the managed area.

The hunter who knows no place on private land where he can go — and annually, this number grows by leaps and bounds — finds the management areas to be a blessing. Here he can hunt and he knows it. There's no chance involved in finding a place to

go. Not only that, he has an excellent chance — generally better than on the "outside" hunts — to find his deer. The herd is concentrated into the area. This doesn't make getting your deer automatic, however.

Many deer hunters plan their week of vacation to coincide with the week-long buck hunts on the managed areas. Those who can't go that week, or those who prefer not to go that week — or some who don't get their deer that week, still have other opportunities for hunting the managed areas. The variety of hunts on these areas is getting better each year.

For example, last year the first primitive weapons hunt for the state was held on the Warwoman area, near Clayton. Muzzle loading firearms — shotguns and rifles — and long bows and crossbows were the only weapons allowed. This year, this feature was extended to three more areas, Clark Hill, Russell, and Chickasawhatchee.

Also in north Georgia, a new area will be opened for deer hunting. A three-day hunt for bucks only will be limited to the first 400 hunters to check in at the Allatoona area.

This year, hunts on Suwanoochee will be free, although a hunter must check in and out. All other areas will charge a fee of \$5 for each hunt, as in past years.

The very popular Chickasawhatchee area will be open for buck only hunts on three two-day periods. For each two-day period, 300 hunters will be

Antlerless hunts are scheduled for Clark Hill and Cedar Creek areas on a limited basis. Both are Jan. 2. Cedar Creek's antlerless hunt will be limited to the first 500 hunters in line at the check station at 8 a.m. the day before the hunt. Clark Hill will be limited to 300, and like Cedar Creek, the first hunters in line at 8 a.m. the day before the hunt, will get the permits.

Warwoman has a good population, and has the largest deer in the North Georgia region. "There is not much participation in our hunts there because it is difficult to hunt. But if a person wants to try for a trophy, this is the place to go in North Georgia," said C. V. Waters, manager of the Commission's Northern Region.

Blue Ridge, one of the largest of the state's management areas, has always been one of the favored places

Populations are at the carrying capacity on all areas, and a good reproduction last fall has left a good number of deer to be harvested. Track counts have shown good quantities of deer.

Because of excellent access to Clark Hill, bucks don't last too long there, consequently they are less in numbers and smaller. At Cedar Creek, bucks are larger than at Clark Hill, yet smaller than at Piedmont Experiment.

The picture is not quite as bright in the Southern Region, according to Regional Manager Frank Parrish. "While it is difficult to predict very

Suwanoochee, he said, is a completely different situation from any other management area in the state. Heavy undergrowth of palmetto and gallberry exists, leaving the hunter with two choices—get a tree stand or hunt the firebreaks and woods roads.

Studies at the Atomic Energy Commission's property along the Savannah River showed that when hunting with dogs was begun, reproduction of deer dropped very sharply.

[illegible]

Pointers for Bobwhite

Tips on how to hunt

By Ronald Simpson
Game Biologist

The motionless stance of a bird dog, the sudden rush of beating wings, and the fast shooting that follows is a scene familiar to all quail hunters. As familiar as the hunt, is the feeling of satisfaction that follows a meal of southern fried quail after a hard day of hunting.

Excellent quail hunting is part of our heritage in the South, especially here in Georgia. This high quality hunting has gained a nationwide reputation for Georgia and annually attracts many hunters from over the entire United States.

The bobwhite is essentially a farmland game species. This, however, does not mean that forest land cannot provide good quail hunting. If conditions are suitable for quail in wooded areas, as can be maintained with proper management practices, large numbers of quail can be supported.

The bobwhite is usually found on or near field borders, fence rows, or wherever there is a change from a grass or shrub area to woodland. In wooded areas with a huntable quail population, the bobwhite is likely to be found just about anywhere but, here again, it is usually found near shrub areas which provide cover for them.

Quail hunting is not affected by the time of day as is deer, turkey, or squirrel hunting. On warm days it is better to hunt during the cool morning and late afternoon hours as a bird dog will not get as hot and will be able to find birds easier.

The shotgun is the standard quail "getter." The type of shotgun and the size of shot used are as varied as the hunters that use them. Everything from a single shot to an automatic shotgun in gauges from 410 to 12 are used. However, a 12, 16, or 20 gauge double barrel, pump, or automatic shotgun are the most preferred. The shotgun may have a modified choke

The air is crisp, the dog is on point. Up comes the quail, and...well what else could be a finer sport—or more typically Georgia?



or an improved cylinder with a barrel length from 18 to 32 inches. A 26 inch barrel with an improved cylinder should prove to be best under most circumstances. The best shot size to use is the number 8 but this also varies with the type of cover hunted and hunter preference.

Quail may be hunted with or without bird dogs if a person knows an area well enough, but hunting with dogs is unquestionably more successful. Pointers and setters are the most common types of bird dogs. The best combination in hunting with bird dogs is to have both a close ranging and a wide ranging dog, that is, a dog which

works near the hunter and one which works a large area around the hunter. In hunting large open fields a wide ranging dog is best and in hunting wooded and dense shrub areas a close ranging dog is best.

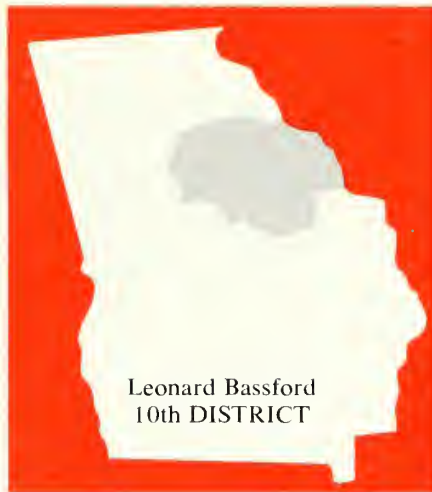
A bird dog will find dead birds which would otherwise be lost. This is true in all types of cover because a bobwhite blends in well with the forest floor and its downed location is easily lost when hunting in grass and shrub areas. A bird dog will also find many wounded birds which will sometimes run considerable distances through undergrowth and eventually die.

Practice makes almost perfect when shooting quail. Even the best marksmen do not score a kill with every shot. The greatest obstacle a new quail hunter must overcome is shooting into the entire covey when the birds are flushed. The experienced hunter calmly concentrates on just one bird at a time and in doing so may kill two or three birds on the covey rise.

In areas with a high quail population many hunters prefer to hunt only coveys and do not hunt single birds after a covey is flushed. Hunting singles can be fun and is good experience for a beginning quail hunter. Shooting singles will allow him to concentrate on just one bird and readily see his mistakes when shooting.

The number of persons per hunting party should be kept to a minimum, two or three people, for safety reasons. Accidents are more likely to occur when five or six persons are in a quail hunting party because of the difficulty in positioning everyone so that he can get a safe shot and the laxness that may occur due to excitement when the birds flush. A large hunting party could be broken down into several smaller hunting parties and, thus, provide better and safer quail hunting for each person.





meet your commissioner

The State Game and Fish Commission is a constitutional body composed of 11 members, one from each of the ten congressional districts in Georgia, plus one member from the six coastal counties.

Its members are appointed by the governor for seven year terms.

In this series of articles, you will meet individually the men who represent you in the conservation and development of Georgia's wildlife resources.

By Jim Tyler

"There were a hundred boats churning the water behind me. It was the National Regatta Outboard Motor Race. I was in third place. And then it happened. My motor blew up. Those one hundred boats roared by, their wakes pushing me back and forth. . . ." The speaker was 10th District Game and Fish Commissioner Leonard Bassford of Augusta.

"But golly," he chuckled, "that was a long time back. It was in 1928 in the Cape Fear River near Wilmington, North Carolina. The boats would only go about 45 miles per hour, but that was fast then. I raced for a few years in my younger days, won a few, then quit boating for a long time.

Now 60, Bassford is back to boating again, but his boat racing is limited to chasing the schooling bass on Clark Hill Reservoir. It probably isn't as exciting as his previous racing, but the action is pretty fast when racing a boat after hungry bass that break the Clark Hill surface in a feeding frenzy while they pursue schools of small shad.

An enthusiastic fisherman, Bassford

has one boat for chasing bass, a different boat for conventional fishing, and a cabin cruiser for trolling and pleasure riding.

On a recent visit to Clark Hill, Bassford took his wife Doris and two of his grandchildren for a ride in the 26 foot cabin cruiser. There are three daughters and four grandchildren in the Bassford family.

The boat cut cleanly through the water while the passengers savored the ride, the lake, and the late summer sky. When it was over, the Commissioner eased the cruiser into the boat dock slip like an old pro.

A veteran fisherman and boatman, Commissioner Bassford is a hunter as well. He looks forward to dove season each year; he's also been known to drop a few quail.

Like everyone else, it's not all rod and gun and sky. The businessman side shows the lifelong resident of Augusta as the owner of a textile by-product company in Augusta — Bassford and Company.

His activities on the State Game and

Fish Commission are as varied as they are many. And with his close touch with the sportsman's needs and wants, he has been a very effective commissioner. Presently vice chairman, he is in the third year of his second term as a commissioner. He served previously from 1948 to 1955, and was chairman in 1954.

The biggest feather in his many feathered commissioner's hat, represents his efforts in getting the ball rolling for the purchase of the McDuffie Public Fishing Area near Thomson. Other notable accomplishments include his part in the fish stocking in Clark Hill. During his first term as a commissioner, a rather large feather was added for his work in the project of stocking deer and turkeys in the Clark Hill Management Area.

All these many streams of Leonard Bassford's commitment and enjoyment of the outdoors, flow smoothly and form one river of fact. Georgia outdoorsmen have one of their kind sitting up there calling the plays on the future of Georgia's wildlife.



Zippering across the water, Leonard Bassford guides his racing boat. This picture was taken nearly 40 years ago, when at 45mph you were really moving.



On his favorite lake, Clark Hill, Bassford enjoys a bit of fishing with two of his grandsons. It's a toss up as to who is having the best time.



The best trout and bass fishing spots are on beds of oysters, called shell beds or "fish drops." High tide is usually best, when the shells are covered by water.

Augusta Chronicle outdoor editor Bill Babb holds the evidence that sea trout and channel bass are in abundant supply on the Georgia coast during the late fall.



Saltwater Fishing?

Why Not Georgia

By Glenn Smith

The page of a calendar is thin. Perhaps the line also is thin that separates anglers into two groups, one that catches an abundance of fish and the other that doesn't.

When it comes to fishing Georgia's coast, tearing off a page or two of the calendar means removing many of the second group of fishermen from the scene. It also brings out the most successful group.

When the November page is top after tearing away all the summer months, then coastal fishing in Georgia comes into its own. This is the month for catching big stringers of channel bass and sea trout in direct contrast to freshwater fishing, which usually is considered best in early spring.

Come November, private boat-owners have geared up for this annual fishing spree, while fishing camps with boats, motors, bait, and guides are ready for whoever may wish to try his — or her — luck at any one of a variety of species that are attracted to Georgia's unique coastline.

A big feature of the Georgia coast is the great abundance of natural sounds, bays, and inlets which provide protected feeding grounds for fish, not to mention quiet waters for fishermen who are at the mercy of the winds and waves in many other areas of the East.

Georgia offers the advantage of a choice to salt water anglers. They can take advantage of the sheltered bays or rivers to fish for a variety of tasty and sporting species. On the other hand, the daring can go out as far as fifty miles for some mighty kings of the sport fishing world.

November offers some true excitement for coastal fishermen, and the folks on the shoreline predict this will be a banner year. The spotted sea trout, also known as the speckled trout, just plain "trout", or winter trout, is probably the most abundant and frequently fished for of all coastal varieties, and they started hitting early this year, indicating a good run. The trout is a denizen of the sounds and rivers along the eastern edge of the state. It is world famous as a table delicacy, which is the main reason why it is so popular. It can be caught in the late months of the year, but is particularly bounteous in November.

Another prizewinning fish at this time of the year is the red drum, or channel bass, red fish, bass, and spot tail. It can be caught year round, but the best months are October and November. Smaller fish are caught in the rivers leading inland, but surf fishermen catch larger red drum, as do anglers working the inlets. They are usually taken by still fishing with dead shrimp or cut bait, although surf casting is quite popular. Inshore catches are especially good in grass beds and usually average two to ten pounds. Offshore, channel bass run ten to thirty pounds, and that's thirty pounds of excellent eating meat.

All these many streams of Leonard Bassford's commitment and enjoyment of the outdoors, flow smoothly and form one river of fact. Georgia outdoorsmen have one of their kind sitting up there calling the plays on the future of Georgia's wildlife.

Another popular and more abundant fish at this time of the year in Georgia's coastal waters is the striped bass. Stripers are excellent food fish and can be caught during October in the bays and sounds leading to open waters. A little later and early in the Spring, they will be found in fresh water rivers and tidal creeks. The best way to catch stripers is by trolling with spoons, jigs, or broken-back plugs. The best runs of this great game fish can be found in the Altamaha, Ogeechee, Savannah, and St. Mary's rivers. They range in weight from three to 40 pounds.

The tides on the full of the moon will have an effect on fishing along the coast. The best choice for November will be the first quarter around the 20th. The last quarter, November 5th, will also be good. Three to five days either side of the full or new moon (Nov. 28 and 12) will produce less desirable results owing to strong flood tides.

Fishing for sea trout and red drum is very much the same. The best bait is live shrimp, but they can also be

taken on cut mullet or artificial lures. If you're inclined to good sport, while losing an occasional fish, try light spinning tackle with 12 to 20 pound test monofilament line. If you want to increase the size of your catch, the accepted gear includes a heavier bait casting rod and reel with 27 to 36 pound test line.

For trout, the boat should be anchored, preferably over oyster beds called "fish drops" by natives, using a slip float with the line allowed to drift back with the current or tide. Red drum fishing is best with a slip float or by surfcasting. The trout usually pick October to move into rivers and creeks from the sounds and bays.

There are abundant facilities on the Georgia coast for all types of salt water fishing, but right now we'll concentrate on the best bets for trout and bass fishing. The small boat is best, and if you own your own, you can launch it at one of a number of fishing camps. If you own a motor, but no boat, you can rent the boat, or a boat with motor at a fish camp. The greatest concentrations of fish camps are located in the Savannah area, near Shellman's Bluff, and at the resorts near Brunswick, but it is not impossible to rent boats at other spots along the coast.

If you are a newcomer to coastal fishing, it might be worth the investment to hire a guide the first time you go out. The guides are not as plentiful as the boats, but most fish camps can provide a guide or at least recommend a spot where you can find one. You can also rent tackle at a reasonable rate if you don't own your own.

The coastal fishing scene in Georgia is as good as any state in the South. The State Game and Fish Commission has a pamphlet which outlines the different fishing that can be had in various seasons as well as the varieties of fish and facilities available to fishermen. It can be obtained free by writing the State Game and Fish Commission, 401 State Capitol, Atlanta, 30334.

There is nothing that can compare with the sight and scent of the sea on a sunny day, which is one reason why salt water fishermen are so enthusiastic about their sport. Coastal fishing will build a bigger appetite, bring on sounder sleep, and satisfy the urge to be outdoors better than any other type. And the sound of the surf in your ears is a music that can't be reproduced anywhere else but right at the ocean's edge.

Launching hoists are located at most fishing camps, but boats must be equipped with lifting rings in most camps to use the hoist. Launching ramps are not practical in the tidal area. PHOTOS: Jim Morrison



Shellman Bluff at Eunonia is one of the most popular sport fishing villages on the Georgia coast. Fishing camps have bait, boats, motors, gas, guides, lodging, and restaurant facilities.



The most popular bait for both the channel bass or "spottail bass" and the trout is shrimp, which are readily available until after the first of the year. This is the most common line rig.





Happy Hunting Grounds

By Jim Morrison

PRIVATE CLUB
MEMBERS ONLY
TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED

POSTED
NO HUNTING
NO FISHING
NO TRESPASSING

In some parts of Georgia, it seems as if a posted sign is standard equipment for every tree on public hunting areas leased to the State Game and Fish Commission, the sign has a different meaning.

Suppose for one awful moment that you are one of the estimated 100,000 hunters who live in the metropolitan Atlanta area, or in one of Georgia's other growing cities.

Make the picture even worse and pretend that you are one of the thousands of people who have recently moved there from a farm area that is many hundreds of miles away, perhaps in another state, and that you have absolutely no connections with a landowner nearby to hunt on his property.

Carry this awful nightmare one step further and imagine that you are driving out of town in the country with your son Bill, shotguns in the trunk, looking for a place to jump a rabbit or two.

Here's where the imaginary part takes off and harsh reality steps in. You don't have to imagine what those

roadside signs say for at least the first 50 miles, because they really exist. It seems that almost every tree or fencepost has overnight sprouted a "No Hunting, No Fishing, No Trespassing, No Nothing" sign, followed by the not so veiled threat "Violators will be prosecuted."

It's obvious that this trend toward posting of private land is all too common in Georgia, especially around large cities where more and more of us live. The reasons for it are many, and most of them are very sound.

In the first place, many of those new arrivals in town don't have any connections with landowners in the immediate area, and have few chances to make any. But, these people still enjoy hunting and would like to continue it after moving into their new home. These hunters must find an out-

let for their interests, so it's quite natural that areas directly adjacent to the cities soon have all the hunting pressure that they can stand, frequently leading to the sprawl of posted signs, especially in good hunting areas.

The problem is rapidly compounded by inconsiderate hunters who "forget" to ask permission to hunt, and who may have some other mental lapse like forgetting to close the pasture gate on thoroughbred beef cattle, breaking down fences and posts while crossing over them, and perhaps even threatening livestock, buildings, and people with injury from stray bullets, etc.

Of course, we all like to think that anyone who hunts is a considerate sportsman who always asks permission to hunt and respects the property of others when he does. But this isn't always the case, unfortunately. Just a few

incidents of this kind by a small number of inconsiderate, ungrateful individuals can close thousands of acres of private land to everyone except the trespasser for hunting.

True, it's probably easier to find a place to hunt rabbits or squirrels, especially in South Georgia. But how about quail hunting? The farmer who hunts quail himself, and many do, regards them as among his most valuable possessions. He frequently wants to save the few quail he has left for himself. If he has gone to some trouble and expense to raise quail, then he's more than likely to post his land. It's the natural thing to do, and there is no valid criticism of it that the landless sportsman can make.

For the law-abiding but landless sportsman, there are only two approaches that can be made to private landowners. One is to come to the farmhouse with hat in hand and, in a friendly way, ask permission to hunt, politely retiring if refused. The other way, becoming more common, is to join a group of sportsmen who like to hunt and lease hunting rights from the landowner for perhaps 50 cents an acre a year. There is little criticism that can be made of this either.

But how about the sportsman who has no connections, who doesn't belong to a group, and who can't afford to pay \$300 a year himself to quail hunt on 600 acres?

This is where the State Game and Fish Commission comes in. It is already obvious in many areas of the state that the hunter's greatest problem is simply the problem of finding a place to hunt (or fish, in some areas). It is also equally obvious that this problem isn't going to get any better in future years, with more and more hunters and more and more posted or leased land.

Realization of the need to do something about this problem before it becomes severe was one of the primary reasons why the Game and Fish Commission asked for and received an increase in the price of hunting and fishing licenses from the General Assembly.

With this increase in the budget of the Commission, the State is now actively attempting to lease the hunting rights on every acre of land that can be acquired which meets the requirements for a public hunting area. Generally, this means that the area should be composed of at least 15,000 acres of contiguous land under the ownership of a small number of owners that is capable of being managed as a public hunting area should be.

At present, approximately half a million acres of land meeting this description is under lease to the State Game and Fish Commission. The Com-



mission hopes to double this acreage as soon as the land can be leased, possibly reaching a goal of two million acres within the next five years.

Money from the recent license increase will not be used to pay land owners for leasing their land to the State. These funds are used only for paying the salaries of area managers to patrol the areas and to improve the habitat, to purchase equipment for their use, and to provide needed supplies and materials, such as boundary signs, boundary paint, gates, bridges, access roads, food patches, etc.

In all, more than four million acres of land owned by private timber companies in Georgia could be put under game management programs by cooperative agreements with the Commission. Advantages to the companies are several in number, including fire protection advantages by the assignment of a full-time area manager who would assist in spotting and reporting forest fires, as well as helping to prevent vandalism.

Because of the reasons brought out in the "Quail Capital" article in this and next month's *Game and Fish Magazine*, the only areas available for Commission leasing are forest areas, which primarily will have forest game hunting. On these areas, Commission game management manipulation of the habitat must be consistent with the primary use of the areas by their owners: growing marketable timber.

In future years, the Commission hopes to begin a program of actually purchasing land for hunting areas. On such areas, manipulation of the habitat to produce good hunting could be more easily accomplished. Control of the habitat is the key to game management. Such areas would also be virtually self-sustaining through the sale of timber grown on them.

After the problem of finding a place to hunt, the second greatest problem concerning many hunters is declining bird hunting, especially quail, in the many areas of Georgia rapidly becoming forest or grassland areas.

Because of this, Commission game biologists are devoting more attention to finding a suitable woods game bird for Georgia as well as a good grassland or pasture game bird. Money from the license increase will be used to expand

research and stocking programs which may succeed in establishing such birds in Georgia.

Because of the shortage of game biologists in the Game and Fish Commission's ranks during recent lean years, the Department has had little time to devote to extension work with landowners who wish to improve hunting, especially small game, on their own lands. With license increase funds, it will be possible for the first time to hire an adequate number of game biologists to institute such a program on the same scale now available to private pond owners. The efforts of the biologists will be especially valuable to landowners in improving quail hunting.

In addition to extension service work with landowners, the additional game biologists are needed to help expand research into a wide number of investigations designed to find the answers for improving Georgia's hunting. During the coming year, game biologists will begin work on 11 different and far-reaching research projects.

To assist extension services to landowners, one project will be initiated to study and make information available on small game management techniques for increasing quail, rabbit, squirrel, dove, and other populations on private land. Yet another study will attempt to determine what predators, if any, harm wildlife populations and how great is the damage by them on both small and big game.

Several studies will be continued in the field of deer management. One investigation almost completed will show the breeding dates of deer throughout the entire state to help the Commission in setting deer hunting seasons, as well as indicating whether deer herds are decreasing or increasing.

Biologists are now planning to purchase small radio transmitting units for attaching to deer during a managed hunt to evaluate the movements of deer while being hunted. Another project will attempt to determine what the crippling loss of deer is using various types of weapons and hunting methods.

In addition to these many research tasks, the new biologists will be assigned to help the wildlife habitat programs of other governmental agencies, including the U.S. Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, ASCS, Cooperative Extension Service, and the Georgia Forestry Commission. For example, one study is now in progress by the Game and Fish Commission to evaluate the effects of the Small Watershed Program on wildlife.

Wouldn't you say that all these many programs are worth paying a dollar a year more for the wonderful privilege of enjoying better hunting in Georgia?



Which is Most Dangerous Man or Gun?

By Dean Wohlgemuth



Top left: Trigger-happy gunner takes out his wrath of not finding any game on a National Forest sign. He probably needs target practice all right, but this isn't the place. Not only is it destructive to public property, but a car might come around the curve just as he fires and the bullet may be deflected toward the car.

Top right: Watch those muzzles! Walking side by side, these careless hunters suddenly realized with horror and shocked surprise, that they were staring down the muzzles of each other's weapon.

Center left: When two hunters are together, this is the proper way to get across. If each crawled through, taking their own guns with them, there would be a very great likelihood one of them might be shot accidentally.

Center right: Hunting by himself, this hunter is risking a blast hitting him square as he pulls the gun through after him. Properly, he should have opened the action of the gun and laid it carefully on the other side, then crawled through.

Bottom left: Alcohol and gunpower can make a very explosively deadly combination. Senses dulled by alcohol breed many deadly mistakes afield. When there are firearms about, there's no place for alcohol.

Pick a newspaper — any newspaper. Chances are good you'll find a story of a violent death. Death may be by any of dozens of available methods and tools. Nonetheless, you can bet that in the story's wake, there'll be a flood of editorials, crying for firearms legislation.

Now, this article is not being written for the purpose of arguing pro or con on gun legislation. But, with hunting seasons getting into full swing, it's a good time to look into the gun situation, and the dangers involved with firearms.

Forget about murders and concentrate on gun accidents. Every year there are tragedies in the woods. If all sportsmen were as careful as they should be, there would be no need at all for any deaths or injuries while hunting.

Then too, not all shooting or gun accidents happen in the woods. Frequently you'll see a story in the paper about a child that was killed when playing with his father's gun.

Is the gun a killer? Is it the real culprit in these cases? Just how deadly is a gun?

The old saws have it that a chain is no stronger than its weakest link, that a football team is no better than its quarterback, and you could go on and on. Now, let's write one for gun owners — the gun is no more deadly (or safe) than its owner.

One thing you can bet on — that gun didn't climb down from its place on the rack on the wall, insert a cartridge into its own chamber, aim itself, and pull its own trigger. In each instance, there was at least one person responsible, in some way or other, in the firing of the gun.

Guns cannot kill unless they are loaded, their muzzles are aimed and their triggers pulled. The gun, without a person's hand upon it, is as harmless as a bottle of milk. It's just an inert piece of metal and wood, incapable of thinking or doing anything.

For years they've been saying that about cars. It's about time people began to think along the same lines when it comes to guns.

Accidents in the home are completely inexcusable. When they happen, you can be sure that the gun owner either never bothered to learn the basic rules of gun safety, or else he just ignores them.

So let's get down to a bare begin-

ning. The first thing anyone should do or think about when he touches a gun is that the weapon is due respect. It was made to kill. But to be a killer, it needs man. By itself it is only half the team.

Always treat every gun as though it were loaded, until you have checked and know for sure that it is not. Even after making sure, just as a matter of good habits and further safety, never point that gun toward anything you don't want to shoot.

When you read of a youngster that killed himself or his brother or sister with a loaded gun at home, there is always one important fact that is omitted in the story — the owner of the gun or the last person to use it, left the weapon loaded.

Many people feel that for home safety purposes, it's useless to have the gun unloaded. Do they ever stop to think of the risks involved? Especially if they have young children?

It doesn't take that long to load a gun, if indeed you really do need it loaded. The sight of a gun in a person's hand would make most any intruder think a second time before doing anything foolish.

As opposed to the need for using a gun for home protection, consider the likelihood of a youngster picking up a gun in your house. I'll wager for every time a gun is needed to protect a home, there are 10,000 times that a person other than the owner of said gun, picks up a weapon to look at it. If that person is a child, he'll pull the trigger. Maybe even an adult hunter will do the same.

The moral of this part of the story is short, simple, but very very important: **DON'T KEEP GUNS LOADED, EXCEPT WHEN IN THE FIELD WHERE THEY'LL ACTUALLY BE SHOT!**

Of all hunting accidents actually in the field, one of the biggest causes is this one: the shooter failed to make certain of his target before pulling the trigger.

The same story is told over and over again. The hunter just had a couple of days to hunt. This might be his only chance for a shot at big game all year. He got over-anxious and when he saw a movement, he was SURE he saw antlers. The "antlers" turned out to be small limbs above the head of another hunter.

Then there is the guy who climbed

a fence, with his companion beside him. The safety of the gun was off, and the guy held the gun in hand while climbing across. A twig, the fence, something caught the trigger.

Or else he leaned against a fence post. Or laid it down. But he forgot to open the action first.

That gun can't fire, if its action is open. This is a cardinal rule that all hunters must be aware of at all times. No matter if it's a single shot, pump, bolt, lever, double barrel or whatever. If that action is open, the gun cannot be fired. When crossing fences, or crossing or going through anything difficult or risky, open the gun's action.

There's another point that needs to be brought out, and here's just as good a place as any to insert it. Many people are of the opinion that a high-powered rifle used for big game is more dangerous from a hunter-safety standpoint than is a shotgun.

Have you ever seen a person that's been hit with a shotgun at short range? If you do, you'll never forget it. Nothing, believe this, **NOTHING** is more deadly in the way of firearms at close range, than a shotgun.

Why? Simply because it spreads out its shot into a wide pattern. With a solid hit, it injures a much larger area. Injury is usually more severe. A single bullet may miss a vital area, while a shotgun blast covers a wide area, including vital spots.

So within 100 yards, the shotgun loaded with many pellets, is by far the most dangerous. The slug loaded gun is similar to the rifle, except that the slug is much larger and—at that short range — more deadly than a rifle bullet.

Beyond a hundred yards, the rifle is more dangerous than a shotgun. But the chances of being hit at that distance are far less. A gun aimed just a degree or two to the side of an object can miss by several inches, even feet, at any great distance.

Statistics prove that most shooting accidents happen well within the 100 yards we've been talking about.

Here is something else well worth passing on. Teach boys how to **PROPERLY** handle guns when they are young. Teach them to give guns due respect. They'll never forget.

Teach them to enjoy the great out-of-doors and they'll never forget that either. And they won't be juvenile delinquents.

GET THE JUMP ON THE DUCKS

By Dean Wohlgemuth

Slow, careful, very quiet strokes with one or two paddles can move a small boat almost silently through the water. In marshes, swamps and tidal waters, this works well in jumping ducks, just around the next bend.





To get at wood ducks, you have to get where the wood duck lives. That means getting on some waders and sloshing through the thick swamps. Thick timber makes shooting fast and tricky.

The boy, small for his age at 16, crept quietly as possible across the grain field, below the small dam. The water on the pond was out of sight.

From the road, some quarter of a mile distant, there had been a few dark spots on the water. Ducks!

The heavy old double barrel 12 gauge, outside hammers and all, was clutched firmly in the boy's hands. In the twin tubes were heavy loads, number sixes.

At last the long stalk to the dam was completed. Hearing nothing after a short pause to suck in his breath as soundlessly as he could, the boy began carefully climbing up the dam, keeping as low to the ground as he could. Then, at the instant he reached the top of the dam, hammers back on the ancient double, he burst to his feet.

There was a startled reaction from the ducks. They recovered quickly and bounced into the air, perhaps six or eight of them.

The boy drew a bead on the closest greenhead drake and let blast his modified barrel. As the duck fell, he was already swinging toward another duck! Bam! A double!

One of the birds had fallen out into the water, badly wounded, barely able to move. Off came the boy's shoes, pantlegs were rolled up, and the boy waded into the icy water. It was shallow for quite a distance, and at last he was able to capture the duck, but only after another shot, which was required to dispatch the mallard.

Happily, he grabbed up his quarry, gun and shoes, and walked back to his old jalopy, parked on the country road, out of sight of the pond.

He loaded the gun and ducks into the trunk of the car, put on his shoes and slid under the steering wheel. His pantlegs were wet. Well, he thought, 'll hear from mother about that.

He was on his way home from school. Living in a small country community far from a high school, he had to drive 12 miles a day each way. During duck season it always took longer to get home because he knew by taking the back roads he could pass at least six ponds. And with luck, half of them or more would have ducks on them.

Occasionally he'd get home with his limit or at worst, several ducks. Then it didn't matter what was said about getting his school clothes wet or muddy. Nothing could dampen his spirit then.

In his mind, the boy pictured the day when he would be a man. Someday, he thought, I'll have a blind on a good duck hunting lake where ducks are plentiful. I'll have a spread of decoys, and a nice, new pump shotgun. Just watch me then!

Quite a few years have passed. Other methods of hunting ducks have all been given a try. A shiny new automatic is on the rack of the wall. Nonetheless, with nostalgia, I recall those boyhood duck hunts fondly and if given a choice, I'd go back to jump shooting ducks on the ponds before hunting them any other way.

Don't get me wrong, I enjoy sitting in a blind, even though the wind is icy and my feet are freezing. Duck hunting is one of my very favorite forms of recreation. Alas, it's now harder to come by, with diminishing waterfowl populations in recent years.

Mention duck hunting and your audience will probably picture a stool (or spread) of decoys in front of a blind. This is the popular conception of what duck hunting is all about. But there is more than one way to shoot a duck.

Jump shooting is not only the simplest way, it's often the most productive. The action certainly is fastest, at least most of the time.

Blind shooting can be slow in blue-

bird weather, but you might still find some ducks in streams and potholes when the sun insists on shining disgustingly bright.

Just because there are good flights of ducks overhead does not insure that there will be plenty of action in the blind.

Three ingredients are important to blind shooting. They are decoys, blinds and calls. You've got to get the ducks in to you, and to do this you need something to attract them. This means you need to have a good set for your duck decoys. There must be an appropriate number of block, (or decoys), and they must be set in such a fashion so as to look natural.

On large water, for example, a small handful of decoys probably won't be enough to get much notice. On the other hand, if you're hunting potholes for mallards, a small puddle filled with three dozen decoys could tell Mr. Mallard Leader that there isn't enough room or food for his flock.

The basic purpose behind using decoys is to make passing ducks feel secure in stopping over at your area. The stool must be made to look as if ducks were feeding and resting. To my way of thinking, this means most of the blocks should be along the edge of weeds and food plants, rather than just sitting out in open water. But don't get the decoys so far into the grass that they can't be seen.

Further, when laying out your stool, leave an opening of water near your blind where the ducks can land. Some hunters like to set their blocks in a sort of question mark pattern, with all open water in front of them, surrounding the small pool with decoys. Others set them in something of a doughnut shape, with the open water in the center. Still others prefer to set their blocks in a V shape, a natural position for flying ducks.



Against a background of the dark, early morning sky, this skilled caller sends out notes that woo a flock of ducks toward his decoys.

Decoy sets should be arranged so that incoming ducks will head into the spread from downwind. That is, they'll be flying upwind when they head into your stool. So a V pattern stool should be set with the point of the V facing into the wind. Always set the blocks so they're faced into the wind.

Another important factor in blind shooting is the blind itself. It must blend in with the natural setting. It must be solid enough to hide your movements, and your shining upturned face as you scan the sky. Yet, you must be able to see out of it, so a flock won't sneak up on you — or a high flying flock will pass you by unnoticed, unattracted to your stool without a call.

This brings us to the other ingredient. Calling ducks is an art which few have really mastered. If you're not outstanding with a call, it might pay to leave it pretty much alone most of the time, except when the flock is highly unlikely to pay your stool any attention anyway.

By all means, don't get carried away with the music in your soul when mouthing a duck call. Too much calling is worse than none at all. If you had a good thing going for you, would you be anxious to call in every person in sight? Ducks will let others know if they have found food and safety, but they don't go overboard in inviting guests.

To attract the flying ducks' attention, the loud, rapid "highball" call is used. Once your quarry has noticed your call and your decoys, go into the chuckling feeding call. This is the one that brings them in to you. Too much loud, fast, excited calling will make them suspicious. If ducks on the water sound too excited, it tells others that there's a safe whereabouts.

One of the popular forms of duck hunting in Georgia — and rightly so — is another type of jump shooting. The difference is that a boat is used. It might also be referred to as drift shooting.

The hunter drifts down a river and jumps ducks as he goes around a bend, getting in some good shots on each flock.

Too, this type of duck hunting is very popular in coastal tidal creeks and rivers, and in swampy areas in south Georgia. Here, of course, the boat won't drift too much. You'll have to paddle very quietly, preferably using the old Indian sculling method, or use a long pole to push the boat along.

If you're after the wood duck, Georgia's most prominent waterfowl species, the method of poling or paddling a boat is best in flooded wood areas, although some hunters wade the shallow water with chest waders.

You'll hear duckhunters talk of pass shooting quite often, too. But you'll seldom see it done. This is a method of finding a place on an oft-used flyway to and from a feeding or roosting area, perhaps between a grain field and a large body of water. Most of the shots are long, and the birds are moving fast and rather high. It's tough shooting.

The jump shooter, float shooter or the man who shoots over decoys doesn't really need magnum loads and rarely will he need a full choke. A modified choke is better for most of the work he'll do.

If a man who hunts over blocks is doing it right, he won't have to take many long shots. He should be patient enough to wait until the birds are all well in range. He shouldn't blast at the first duck that approaches just as it gets in range, but wait until all the birds are even with him, or perhaps even

settling into the water. That way, he can get several shots. And if he's on the ball, he'll have his blind close enough to his decoys so that a modified choke will be tight enough.

There may be times when a full choke is necessary over blocks, when the decoys need to be a little farther from the blind, or when the ducks are just a little too nervous to come in close. And the jump shooter, too, may occasionally find the majority of his shots are at longer range. Perhaps these things are the reasons why double barrels have long been among the most popular guns of duck hunters, since they are usually equipped with a modified choke in one barrel and a full choke on the other.

Sizes of shot to use on ducks is a point of argument. I like number sixes for most situations, but a lot of fives, even fours are used. For longer range shots, the larger shot sizes usually work better. Over decoys, especially on smaller species, some hunters even use 7½ shot.

Expert hunters sometimes say that small shot penetrates feathers much better at very short range, no more than 30 yards. Beyond that, however, small shot sheds its velocity rapidly, and just isn't very deadly.

Any way you want to hunt them, you can't find much better sport than duck hunting. And when the day is over and you sit by the fire, drying out your socks, you'll get a whiff of roast duck coming from the kitchen. There's a meal fit for a king coming up. And at the moment, you feel sort of like a king.

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Calendar

SEASONS NOW OPEN

GUN DEER SEASON

Southeast Ga. Season—Oct. 29, 1966 through Jan. 5, 1967 in the following counties:

Brantley, Bryan, Bulloch, Burke, Camden, Candler, Charlton, Chatham, Clinch County south of the Atlantic Coastline Railroad and east of the run of Suwannee Creek, Echols County east of U. S. 129 and south of Ga. 187, Effingham, Emanuel north of U. S. 80, Evans, Glascock, Glynn, Jefferson, Jenkins, Liberty, Long, McIntosh, Pierce County south of U. S. 82 and east of Ga. 121, Screven, Tattnall, Washington and Wayne counties.

Bag Limit—Two (2) Bucks. Hunting with dogs is allowed in all of the above counties.

GROUSE, RUFFED

Season—Oct. 15, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

Bag Limit—3 Daily, possession limit 6.

SQUIRREL

Season—Oct. 15, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

Bag Limit—10 Daily.

OPOSSUM

Season—Oct. 29, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967. Exception: Coweta County opens Oct. 1, 1966 through Jan. 21, 1967.

No Bag Limit.

RACCOON

N. Ga. Season—Oct. 29, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

Bag Limit—One (1) per night per person.

S. Ga. Season—No closed season.

No Bag Limit.

SEASONS CLOSING THIS MONTH

MARSH HENS (GALLINULES & RAILS)

Season—Sept. 15 through Nov. 23, 1966.

Bag Limit—15 Daily, possession limit 30.

SEASONS OPENING THIS MONTH

GUN DEER SEASON

Southwest Ga. Season—Nov. 5, 1966 through Jan. 5, 1967 in the following counties:

Baker, Calhoun, Chattahoochee, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Lee County west of U. S. 19, Marion, Mitchell, Muscogee, Seminole, Stewart, Terrell, Thomas, Webster and Worth County south of U. S. 82.

Bag Limit—Two (2) Bucks, except in Baker, Calhoun, Grady, Dougherty, and Thomas counties where the bag limit is two (2) bucks or one (1) buck and one (1) doe. Exception: The Worth County bag limit shall be one (1) buck only for the season.

Hunting with dogs will be allowed in all of the counties listed above during the season with the exception of Chattahoochee, Muscogee, and Worth counties, where hunting with dogs will be prohibited in order to prevent over-harvest of deer and to insure continued growth of the deer herd.

North and Middle Ga. Season—Nov. 5, 1966 through Nov. 28, 1966 in the following counties:

Banks County east of U. S. 441, Baldwin, Bartow County south of the Etowah River west of U. S. 41, Butts, Columbia, Crawford County north of U. S. 80, Dawson, Fannin, Floyd County east of U. S. 27 and north of U. S. 411, Gilmer County west of U. S. 76 and southwest of Ga. 52 and southeast of the Big Creek Gap Road to the Fannin County Line, Green, Habersham County west of U. S. 23 and south of Ga. 17 south of Hollywood, Hancock, Haralson, Henry, Jasper, Jones, Lamar, Lincoln, Lumpkin, McDuffie, Monroe, Morgan, Murray, Newton, Oglethorpe County south of U. S. 78, Paulding, Polk County east of U. S. 27 and south of U. S. 278, Putnam, Rabun, Richmond, Rockdale, Schley, Stephens County south of U. S. 123 and west of Ga. 17 north of Toccoa, Talbot, Taliaferro, Towns, Union, Warren, White, Walton, Wilkinson, and Wilkes County east of Ga. 47 and south of U. S. 378.

Bag Limit—Two (2) Bucks, except that in order to harvest a bumper crop of deer, Jasper, Jones, Monroe, Putnam and McDuffie counties will be open for either-sex deer hunting on the last day of the regular season, Nov. 28, 1966, with a bag limit of no more than one (1) doe deer. The regular season bag limits will also apply during this period, provided that no gun hunter during the entire year may take more than two (2) bucks or one (1) buck and one (1) doe by any method or methods.

Deer hunting with dogs is prohibited in all of the above listed counties, and it is illegal to run, chase, or pursue deer with dogs in any of these counties.

WILD TURKEY

West Central Ga. Season—Nov. 5, 1966 through Jan. 5, 1967 in the counties of

Chattahoochee, Marion, Muscogee, Stewart, and Talbot.

Bag Limit—One (1) per season.

Southwest Ga. Season—Nov. 19, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967 in the counties of Baker, Calhoun, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Miller, Mitchell, Seminole, and Thomas.

Bag Limit—Two (2) per season.

QUAIL, BOBWHITE

Season—Nov. 19, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

Bag Limit—12 Daily, possession limit 36.

RABBITS

Season—Nov. 19, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

N. Ga. Bag Limit—5 Daily.

S. Ga. Bag Limit—10 Daily.

GEESE

Season—Nov. 7, 1966 through January 15, 1967.

Bag Limit—2 daily, possession limit 4. See federal regulations. Migratory stamp required. Liberty and McIntosh counties closed.

DUCKS, MERGANSERS, AND COOTS

Season—Nov. 24, 1966 through January 7, 1967.

Bag Limit—Ducks: 4 daily, including no more than 2 wood ducks or 2 canvasbacks. Possession limit 8, including no more than 4 wood ducks or 4 canvasbacks. Mergansers: 5 daily, including no more than 1 hooded merganser. Possession limit is 10, including no more than 2 hooded mergansers. Coots: 10 daily, possession limit is 20. See federal waterfowl regulations available with the required \$3.00 federal migratory bird (duck) stamp at all main U. S. Post Offices. State regulations for waterfowl hunting are the same as the federal regulations.

SEASONS OPENING NEXT MONTH

WILD TURKEY

Southeast Ga. Season—Dec. 1, 1966 through Jan. 5, 1967 in the counties of Brantley, Bryan, Bulloch, Camden, Charlton, Chatham, Effingham, Evans, Glynn, Dougherty, Long, McIntosh, Pierce, Screven, Tattnall, and Wayne.

Bag Limit—One (1) turkey gobbler per season. Hens are protected.

WOODCOCK

Season—Dec. 12 through Jan. 30, 1967.

Bag Limit—5 Daily, possession limit 10. See federal regulations.



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GAME & FISH





GEORGIA GAME & FISH

DECEMBER 1966
Volume I Number 3

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A governor who wasn't afraid

Georgia's dynamic young governor, Carl Sanders, is a man who is not afraid to stand up and be counted for a cause which he feels is right, even though it may be potentially unpopular.

It is for this reason that we dedicate the last issue of Georgia Game and Fish this year to Governor Sanders in the last month of his historic four year term in office.

During that time, Governor Sanders did more for the cause of wildlife conservation than any other man in Georgia history. Primarily at his request, the General Assembly this year increased the budget of the Game and Fish Commission from two million to more than three million dollars a year, the largest increase ever made in its appropriation. That Governor Sanders had the courage to make the increase possible by helping raise hunting and fishing license fees is a noteworthy tribute to the strength of his convictions.

As a result of the one million dollar increase, wildlife conservation for the first time in many years in Georgia is adequately financed. Now, the State Game and Fish Commission can afford to staff and manage every acre of public hunting and fishing land that it can lease or purchase. Public fishing areas will be built in many areas of the State, and more than 200 public boat launching ramps will be constructed over the next five years on previously inaccessible streams and lakes. The eight fish hatcheries of the Game and Fish Commission will be renovated and modernized to produce millions of new fish for stocking in public lakes and streams. 20 new wildlife rangers are already on duty, protecting Georgia's invaluable wildlife resources from plunder by ruthless game law violators. These rangers are now better trained, better equipped, and better uniformed, than ever before in history.

Early in the Sanders Administration, the Governor provided funds for the purchase of the largest channel catfish hatchery in the world at Cordele for the Commission, along with the purchase of the McDuffie Public Fishing area near Thomson, first of a chain of such areas to ring Georgia's metropolitan centers.

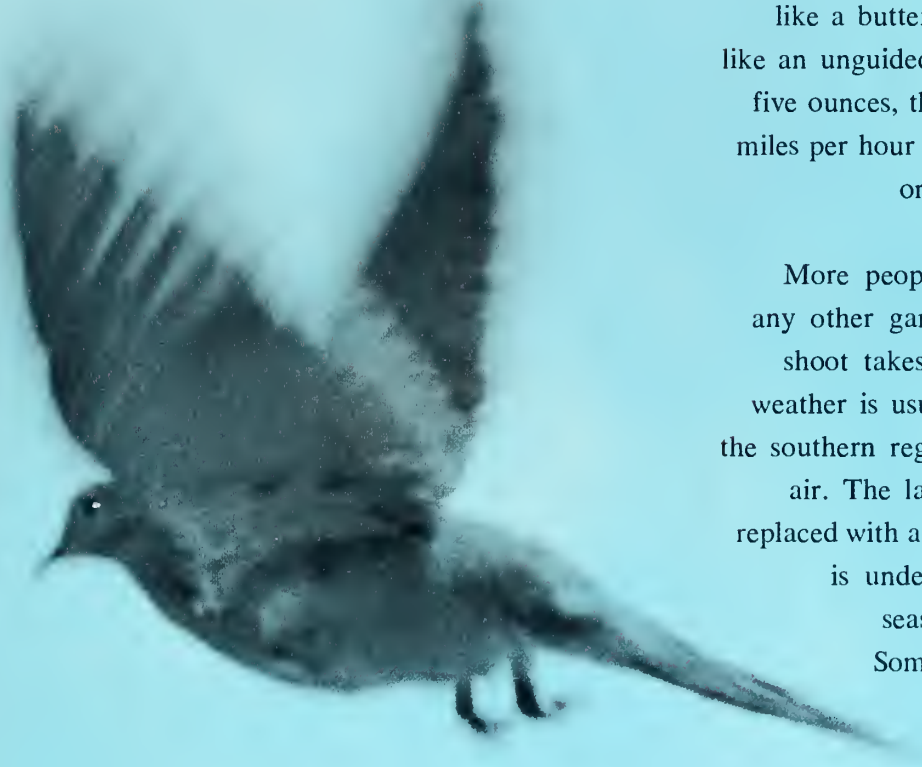
During his administration, more than 132,000 acres of public hunting land were leased to the Game and Fish Commission in the Allatoona, Whitesburg, Chickasawhatchee, Piedmont Experiment, and Oaky Woods game management areas. His sponsorship of a limited liability bill eventually will open more than a million additional acres of industrial lands for hunting.

But Governor Sanders' most important accomplishment probably is his initiation of a reorganization of the leadership of the State Game and Fish Commission along the more efficient, decentralized, professional lines recommended by the study of the department made at his request by the Governor's Commission for Efficiency and Improvement in Government, known as the "Bowdoin Commission."

As an avid hunter and fisherman all his life, Governor Sanders shares many interests in common with Georgia sportsmen. He is a crack shot who especially enjoys dove and quail shooting, and is a deer and a duck hunter as well.

If we could select a nominee for the title "Wildlife Conservationist of the Year" for this year or any year so far, our choice would be Carl Sanders, a great governor that Georgians will miss. — J. M.

ON THE COVER: Georgia's number one dove shooter, Governor Carl Sanders, fires a volley at the star of this month's *Game and Fish Magazine*, the mourning dove. Photo by Jim Morrison.



by joe kight

drifting doves

Doves are perhaps the hardest easy shooting or the easiest hard shooting of any of Georgia's game birds. They can float in as though they were suspended from wires, or bobble along like a butterfly with the hiccups, or flash by like an unguided missile. Weighing only four or five ounces, they can cruise between 30 to 40 miles per hour in calm air. Alarmed by hunters or traveling with the wind they can, of course, go much faster.

More people in Georgia hunt doves than any other game bird. In most areas a dove shoot takes on a festive air. Although the weather is usually a little warm, especially in the southern regions, a different smell is in the air. The languid murky feel of summer is replaced with a crisper, cleaner feel. The harvest is underway, denoting the end of one season and the beginning of another. Some of the poplar and gum trees are hinting that they are thinking seriously of exchanging their summer suits for a bright colorful gown for one last fling.

What is probably the most noted and least mentioned is the sounds of the fields. The rustle of the corn stalks, the caw of a faraway crow, the chirr of insects — especially the sound of the insects — all take on an eleventh hour feel of expectancy.

Dove season is anticipated by some from January when the season closed, to the opening day of the new season. The time in between these dates serves only to round out the calendar and also provides time to catch an occasional fish.

In case you're in doubt, that blur is a mourning dove, the hardest to hit game bird in Georgia. Last year more than 112,000 hunters went after doves.



Hunting from a home-made blind of corn stalks and pine boughs is especially popular in middle Georgia. It pays off with closer shots and clean ground for locating downed birds quickly.

Doves are found throughout the state. While we have a large resident nesting population, many birds found here during the late fall and winter were raised in states to the north. The nest is a very frail affair that is more of a platform than the cup-shaped nests of songbirds. The usual clutch consists of two eggs. Doves have been known to nest in South Georgia every month of the year except December. Although each brood is small, production continues throughout the nesting season. Five to seven broods are started by each pair per year, but nest mortality accounts for about half of the young birds. Three successful broods of two birds each are about average.

Hunting doves requires very little equipment and a minimum of effort. Dull colored clothes which blend with the background will do very well although camouflage clothes are usually harder to detect. However, don't forget that an upturned face will shine like a full moon, so keep your head down until the birds are in range. A long billed cap will help.

A wide variety of shotguns are used, but repeaters in 12, 16, or 20 gauge are the most popular. An improved cylinder or modified choke is quite adequate. Although a full choked gun has a greater range, probably not more than one person in ten can shoot this choke efficiently. Size 7½ to 9 shot are large enough. Most guns seem to pattern these smaller shot better than larger shot. However, each gun will shoot a little differently, so it is a good idea to pattern your gun with different shot sizes to determine which is best for you and your gun.

Doves are strict vegetarians that require free water. Although quail can get enough water from dew and succulent foods, doves must have water to drink. This is especially needed dur-

ing nesting season to manufacture "pigeon milk" which is fed to the young. Good shooting can be had at a watering hole when dry weather forces the birds to concentrate on a few available watering places.

A more dependable place to shoot is over a harvested grain field. Millet, corn, wheat, peanuts, peas, and grain sorghums are choice foods, as are watermelon and tomato seeds. The object is to provide a choice food supply and conditions that are attractive to doves. Bare ground between the rows is best, but a field with close cut stubble is good too. Doves are not scratching birds and therefore have to find their food on top of the ground. In preparing a field for dove shooting, be sure to check the federal regulations. As doves are considered migratory, they are included in the migratory bird treaty act and are under federal regulation. A lot of people find it hard to stop shooting when they have their limit and the birds are still coming in to the field. But bear in mind that if you want to go dove hunting next year and the next, and would like for your kids to enjoy this fine sport, stop shooting when you have the limit. Too, both state and federal judges have been known to frown on game hogs.

The secret of dove hunting, if there is one, is to keep still until the birds are well within range, follow through on your swing, and LEAD him. Perhaps the real secret of a successful hunt is the observance of one simple but "common sense" rule. Don't shoot at low flying birds! Picking shot out of your hide is not a pleasant way to spend the evening. Having a surgeon pick a shot from your eye is even more unpleasant. But to be on a field with good friends when the doves are starting to drift in is, as the man said, paradise enow.

by Jim Morrison



the dove season is too ~~early~~ ~~late~~



"It's just shameful, the way the State lets hunters go out and kill those little birds in September. Why, most of them are so small they can't hardly fly yet, and they're being slaughtered right and left. I even killed one bird that left an egg in my hunting coat. Shooting birds still nesting, or that can't fly, and they call that conservation?"

It doesn't really matter just who it is that's doing the talking, because almost exactly the same words have been said for many years by dove hunters, especially in South Georgia.

If, on the other hand, we were listening to a fellow dove hunter in North Georgia, we probably would hear different, but equally familiar words:

"Those idiots in the State Capitol have done it again! Why can't they ever set the dove season right and leave it the same every year. By the time the season opened, all the birds had left out. We had plenty of birds two weeks ago, and now you can't find any."

Confusing? You can say that again! Both of these viewpoints are based on valid arguments. And both are made by sincere sportsmen interested in good dove shooting. Presumably, they are also good wildlife conservationists.

In between these two warring factions are the poor devils who are supposed to make everyone happy, including the doves: the men of the State Game and Fish Commission. But settling the issue about the dove season

is one problem with even more knots than the average burning issue facing a State wildlife conservation agency.

To begin with, not all doves are born and raised in Georgia, although about 70 per cent of them spend their entire lives here. Because of the migratory 30 per cent that flies into Georgia every year, and more especially because of the doves that fly into the United States every year from Mexico and Canada, the dove has been declared a migratory bird under federal protection. Under treaty acts, doves and other migratory game birds such as ducks may only be hunted between September 1 and March 15 of each year.

But even though the dove is protected by federal law, it would be unfair to entirely "pass the buck" to the federal government concerning the dove season, since both the states and the federal government share joint responsibility for the rules and regulations. These regulations are conservatively set to insure that the annual survival of the dove breeding population is well above the level needed each year to produce as many doves as possible for hunting, year after year.

The federal government declares the "framework" for the dove season, meaning within what beginning and ending dates the states can set their seasons, including the number of days of shooting they can have. In addition, the federal government sets up the maximum bag limit each state may have, along with regulations governing the hunting methods which may be used, such as shooting over baited fields, etc.

These regulations are promulgated through the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Bureau has established the framework for the dove season of September 1-January 15, with 70 half-days of shooting which could begin and end at any time between those dates within two or three consecutive shooting periods, during which time the entire State would be open. The daily bag limit was set at 12 birds a day.

As has been the custom for many years, the State Game and Fish Commission again selected the option of a shorter season beginning earlier in September with a longer second half of the "split season" beginning later in December. Under the existing restrictions placed on the states by the federal government, this pattern has been judged to be the best possible arrangement by Georgia's wildlife agency. But is this arrangement satisfactory to a majority of hunters? If you think so, then read the comments again with which we began this story. These com-

ments were made about the present system, and some of them are shared by the Game and Fish Commission.

The federal regulations determine how liberal the seasons, bag limits, and hunting regulations can be that are set by Georgia. Actually, the state could set a shorter dove hunting season with a smaller bag limit and more restrictive hunting regulations than is allowed by the federal government. It could not set a season longer than allowed by federal regulations, etc.

Normally, the greatest concentration of birds in North Georgia is during the middle two weeks of September, at the time that brown top millet, milo, corn, and other early silage or hay crops are mature enough for cutting. During this period, the entire year's production of surviving young birds is at its greatest numerical peak, and the birds are more concentrated on the harvested fields than at any other time. Naturally, this is the time that North Georgia hunters want to shoot doves. Later on, when the crops have been harvested and cold weather moves in, shooting will be poor, except on a few scattered late corn fields that are harvested with a mechanical picker. Many of the September birds will already have died at the hands of predators, disease, exposure, or parasites.

Normally, dove shooting in North Georgia during the first half of the season is over within two weeks. Shooters are anxious for the legal opening of the season to coincide with this grain maturation date, which unfortunately may vary considerably, depending on rain and climate conditions. Browntop millet, for instance, can be planted anytime from May through July, maturing in six weeks. If rain coincides with cutting, the millet seeds soon germinate, and doves leave the field.

But, suppose the season does hit the grain maturation right on the head. Even then, shooting may be poor. With the rapid increase of dairy and beef cattle farming in Georgia, the acreage of hay and silage crops grown has soared, especially in level terrain that can be worked by machinery on large farms. This has the effect of scattering doves over a much greater area, producing a general decline in the quality of shooting from the "good old days" when good dove fields were less common, concentrating the birds more than is the case today even though just as many doves may be present now as then, if not more. Then, too, doves are an unpredictable lot, inclined to ignore ample food on one field and concentrate on another that is identical a mile away, for no apparent reason.

So, the North Georgian quite likely will complain about the season opening too late.

But, what about the picture in South Georgia during the first season in September? Here the complaints about birds unable to fly or still on the nest ring through the air, along with some more valid comments about the better shooting that will be had later in the year when the birds are not so scattered and food is less plentiful. Besides, the weather is usually unbearably hot for hunting, usually in the 90's, insects are still out in bloodthirsty droves, and snakes are still a nagging worry. But just the same, hunters who have impatiently survived the spring and summer are eager to get into the field again, and the dove season is their first opportunity, in spite of early season objections. But undoubtedly the South Georgia hunter would prefer a season opening in October or later, when shooting is better on fields being planted to winter wheat or being harvested late.

By this time, the obviously perfect answer to this dilemma has undoubtedly swept over you in a great wave of realization. It's so obvious, you can't help but wonder why it hasn't already been done. Why, you say, don't we just simply zone Georgia into a northern zone with a season opening in September and a southern zone opening in October or November?

But throwing a bucket of cold water on this charming daydream is the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, which refuses to consider such a plan on the grounds that it would almost double the number of days for Georgia shooters to hunt doves, possibly threatening the surviving brood stock with a serious reduction. According to the Bureau, if the state were zoned as has often been suggested, Georgians would expect 70 days of shooting in North Georgia and 70 days in South Georgia, giving us up to 140 days of shooting, as compared to the 70 given other states in the eastern management unit. According to the Bureau, hunting pressure on doves would be greatly increased, perhaps doubled, by migration of hunters into North Georgia during the first zone season, followed by concentration of hunters in South Georgia during the second zone season, resulting in a much greater kill of birds, than the present figure of more than three million birds a year. However, this is only a theory, not a proven scientific fact.

The Bureau says that if Georgians are concerned about killing young birds in South Georgia early in the split season and hunting doves in North Georgia late in the second season when they are scarce, then the state should be zoned by state regulations.

For example, during the early first half of the season this year, from Sep-

tember 9 through October 8, South Georgia could have been closed for hunting by State regulation. Then, during the second half of the split season, from December 6 through January 14, North Georgia could be closed by state regulation, if desired.

However, the net effect of this plan would be that South Georgians would lose approximately 30 of their 70 half-days of shooting, and North Georgians would lose approximately 40 of their 70 half-days. It is doubtful if Georgians would be willing to sacrifice hunting days in an already short season, merely to satisfy esthetic considerations about killing young birds. Such a situation well might produce many more complaints than are now heard.

Biologists also point out some birds are still on the nest during the September season, especially in South Georgia, but these birds are seldom killed on a field. Normally, they are still tending the nest and will not come to a harvested field, although some may be shot at an occasional water-hole. This is also one reason why birds are still scattered with poorer shooting in South Georgia during September.

So, there are some good arguments on the side of the federal government for leaving the regulations as they presently are, without zoning. But Georgia's game biologists and many dove hunters believe that the discussion doesn't end there. For one thing, there is considerable disagreement over theories of whether or not dove hunting pressure would be significantly in-

creased if zoning were allowed with 70 days of hunting in each section. Georgia's game biologists contend that few hunters would travel great distances to the other end of Georgia if they had a satisfactory season close at home. They point out that South Georgians could never find better shooting in North Georgia than what they would have at home under a later 70 half-day season of their own, and that both North Georgians and South Georgians would be diverted from dove shooting by other hunting seasons that are open in November, such as quail, squirrel, rabbit, and deer hunting. As a result, they feel that only a small number of North Georgians would drive 200 miles or more to hunt doves in South Georgia for only half-a-day on the weekend, assuming that Sunday hunting is not allowed. In addition, since dove shooting is normally found only on private land, few North Georgians would have good landowner contacts in the southern part of the state. Most landowners only invite their families, close friends, and neighbors to dove shoots.

There is plenty of ammunition on both sides. At present, only Texas is allowed a zoned dove season, due to its great size. But, Georgians point out, Georgia is the largest state east of the Mississippi River. So far, the Bureau has held fast in its position.

But even if zoning never becomes a reality in Georgia, it is sure to be a red-hot issue with Georgia hunters for as long as they still hunt "the grey ghost of the cornfields"



Game biologist Jim Scharnagel records the band number on one of 4,000 doves banded by the State so far this year. This information will help in justifying any changes in the present federal regulations.

Dove shooting in North Georgia depends to a great extent on the date when grain crops such as milo ripen and are harvested, especially by mechanical methods. If the season opens after this period doves will be hard to find.





The squirrel is hunted by more hunters than any other game species in Georgia.

By James T. Hicks

BUSHY TAILS ARE FOR BOYS



Shotguns are most commonly used for squirrel hunting, but many hunters prefer .22 rifles.

Fall is for bushytails, and for boys to go to the squirrel woods, and for grown men to pretend for a while that their youth has returned as they too go hunting Mr. Squirrel.

Regrettably, most present day forest management does not provide the practices that are most beneficial to the squirrel. Mast producing hardwoods such as oak and hickory are the key to an abundance of bushytails. Hollow trees, when present, serve as veritable squirrel factories. All too often neither the mast producing hardwoods nor the hollow trees are spared on areas of intensely managed forestlands. The territory for good squirrel hunting has thus become limited.

The best areas for hunting are patches of hardwoods that may be used by squirrels for feeding stations, den trees, and nesting sites. Fence rows are excellent if a stand of mature timber lies

adjacent to a field of corn. Gray squirrels prefer the hardwood forests of the valleys while the fox squirrel will be found in timbered areas with many openings especially in pecan orchards.

There are several methods of hunting Mr. Bushytail that may be used successfully. To still hunt, the hunter must locate a tree or group of trees that is being used for a feeding area or as a den. He must then conceal himself and remain very still until the squirrels appear. Several squirrels may be taken from one tree or one area if the hunter will wait until he feels that the action is all over before picking up his kill.

Stalk hunting is probably the sportiest method of all to use. Stalking may be done in a heavily wooded area and around the edges of fields or clearings. By advancing quietly, two or three steps at a time and then stopping to survey the trees in the area, the stalking hunter may effectively cover a larger territory than the still hunter. For any measure of success to be attained in this type hunting, the hunter must move very slowly, quietly, and observantly.

A popular method of hunting in many areas is with a dog. A larger amount of territory may be covered with this style of hunting than either still hunting or stalking. The common mixed breed mongrel dog seems to be most efficient in squirrel hunting.

The best time of day for hunting squirrels is early and late. Still, clear, frosty mornings and warm fall afternoons are ideal. Almost without exception, hunting is much better when the wind is not blowing. Damp leaves due to a rain or heavy dew are desirable because they lessen the noise made by the hunter's feet.

The .22 caliber rifle and all the various gauges of shotguns are used for squirrel hunting. The .22 rifle is regarded by many hunters as the more sporting weapon to use. The use of a scope mounted .22 will provide a maximum of sport as well as a full bag if the hunter is skillful. Practically all of the shotguns are adequate with field loads of no. 6 shot.

Drab colored or camouflage type clothing makes the hunter much less noticeable when in the woods. Waterproof boots will add greatly to the comfort of the hunter if wet weather is prevailing.

One of the great values of squirrel hunting is the opportunity it presents to be afield and observe the beauty of nature. Do you remember when you went squirrel hunting as a boy and your Dad would shake a bush so that you could have a chance for a shot? Take your boy squirrel hunting, and remember to shake a bush for him.

by Dean Wohlgemuth



Ray Plaster, area manager of the new Oaky Woods Management Area near Perry, gets a birds-eye view of the area under his charge from atop a firetower located near the heart of his domain.

Oaky Woods Is OK

Folks living in the heart of Georgia have a brand new hunting management area to enjoy this season, thanks to Georgia Kraft Co.'s generous policy of leasing land to the State Game and Fish Commission for that purpose.

This new area is a dandy, too. Open on a somewhat limited scale this first year, the area, named Oaky Woods Game Management Area, has very fine populations of quail and squirrel.

Located in the heart of the state, Oaky Woods is about a half hour's drive from Macon, and two and a half hours from Atlanta. It's south and a little east of Macon.

A huge, 17,000 acre tract was opened this year for small game hunting on Wednesdays and Saturdays until Jan 28. The usual \$1 fee for small game hunts on state-operated areas, applies to these hunts.

"There are plenty of quail on the area," said Ray Plaster, who was given the position of area manager for Oaky Woods. "Recently, I found four cov-

eyes of quail in about an hour's time."

Dick Whittington, supervisor of game for the middle Georgia Region of the Game and Fish Commission, confirmed this. "In areas where timber has been cut, and there are a good supply of weeds, there is fine quail hunting for this type of habitat," he said. He pointed out that removal of timber left the forest floor open enough to grow cover and food for the birds. These areas are growing new timber, but the timber is small enough so as to allow good growth of food cover. He added that cutover areas also provide excellent deer browse.

An excellent squirrel population exists in the area. There is a considerable amount of hardwoods in Oaky Woods, particularly in swampy sections adjoining the Ocmulgee River.

Hunting pressure was light early in the hunting season, possibly because the area is so new that it is as yet unknown to many hunters.

Actually, Oaky Woods consists of

two parts. One part is a large block of 17,000 acres. This is the area open this season for managed small game hunts. Eventually it will be opened for deer hunting. The area was stocked with deer four years ago under federal aid, and cannot be opened for deer hunts until at least five years after stocking.

The other part of the area consists of 15,000 acres in scattered tracts. Although not opened this season, this part of the area will eventually be opened as a public hunting area. Hunters will be allowed to hunt small game in season on this part, without obtaining a permit or paying a fee.

Whittington and Plaster both commented that there was a good amount of deer sign on the area, and that Oaky Woods would most likely provide some excellent hunting for deer.

"Oaky Woods will fill a big gap for hunters in the middle of the state," Whittington said. "It should be a fine all-around area. We expect it to draw hunters from Macon, Warner Robins and Dublin, and other towns in that vicinity."

To reach Oaky Woods from Macon, go south on I-75 to the Georgia 96 highway. Go to the left on Ga. 96 about eight miles to Bonaire. In Bonaire, turn right onto Georgia Highway 247 and go about eight miles. A mile or so past the town of Kathleen, there is a large wooden sign on the left side of the highway, saying "Oaky Woods Management Area." Turn left there onto the dirt road and go about 1½ miles to the checking station.

The area is actually in parts of four counties, Houston, Twiggs, Bleckley and Pulaski. Most of the area is in Houston County.

W. J. Bridges Jr., Vice President of Woods and Woodlands for Georgia Kraft Co., pointed out that Oaky Woods was Georgia Kraft's fourth such woodland area to be put into agreement with the Game and Fish Commission for game management and supervision. This area is the largest of the four. A total of 90,000 acres of Georgia Kraft land is now in management areas.

Mr. Bridges and Rosser Malone, director of the Game and Fish Commission, said Kraft's forest management program, directed to achieve commercial harvesting of trees, was very compatible with the management of both large and small game.

Mr. Malone added that the addition of Oaky Woods brings the Commission's total acreage in managed public hunting areas in Georgia to 876,500 acres. The Commission hopes to reach a goal of one million acres managed for public hunting by 1970.



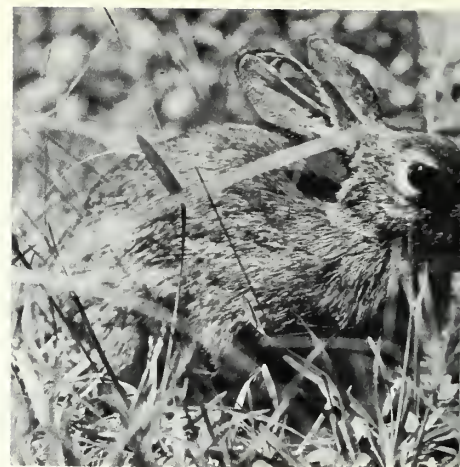
Ray Plaster, right, talks over how things are going on Oaky Woods with James Denton of Georgia Kraft Company. Georgia Kraft leased the land to the Game and Fish Commission to provide more places for the public to hunt.

Outlook is bright for better hunting.

By DEAN WOHLGEMUTH

Small Game

Hunter's Choice



This is the target often sought by small game hunters everywhere. Not only does the rabbit provide an interesting adversary, he's plentiful most everywhere, and ranks high as prime table fare.

Paint a mental picture of a hunting scene.

A beagle yapping, hot on the trail of a rabbit, with hunters hurrying, huffing and puffing, hoping to cut off the bunny before he disappears.

Or a bird dog, creeping forward like he was walking on eggs, then suddenly he freezes — tail extended skyward, forefoot lifted, nose quivering. With shotguns ready, hunters edging ahead of the dog, then the spontaneous burst of birds catapulted into the air with a nerve-shattering whirr.

Or a youngster, .22 rifle in hand, sitting with his back against a huge hardwood tree, his eyes flitting from limb to limb in search of a patch of gray fur. The patch appears, then a small beady eye. The little rifle cracks, and down plummets the squirrel.

Or perhaps it's a spaniel, nosing through the thick underbrush in the mountains, keeping an eye open for his master, never straying too far ahead. From in front of the dog comes an explosion as a ruffed grouse bursts into the open for a fleeting second, giving the hunter a quick snap shot before the darting aerial acrobat swerves seemingly unbelievably close to a tree before zigzagging out of sight through the forest.

All of these scenes are repeated innumerable times each year in Georgia. Small game hunting is the sport of every outdoorsman. The big game hunters started on small game. And after deer season has faded away, you'll find many of the same hunters hanging up their deer rifles, and returning to the field with shotgun or small-bore rifle in search of small game.

And in the state known everywhere as the Quail Capital of the World, there is a wide variety of excellent small game hunting available.

Each year, hunters have much to



When talking of small game hunting in Georgia, the words "bobwhite quail" are just naturally a part of the phrase. He's the most prominent figure in hunting circles hereabouts.



The thunderous, tricky grouse keeps shooters on their toes when they prowl the mountains after him. If you're not ready for him, you'll never put him in the bag.

look forward to in their quest for sport and small game. This season should be no exception. Prospects look good for some very fine hunting in all areas of the state.

Squirrel and quail hunters should have little trouble in finding some good shooting this year.

Squirrel populations look good all around the state, say game biologists and other field personnel. Apparently there was good reproduction last spring along with good survival. Both the mountains and Piedmont sections look good. Also good reports come from the Metter District in the coastal region.

Also, the quail picture is a bright one for the coming season, for the same reasons — good reproduction and good survival. Even in north Georgia areas, not reputed for fine quail hunting, populations seem to be in good order this year.

Grouse hunters can also hope for a good year in the mountain counties, but hunters will have to take their luck where they can find it on rabbits. Again, as last year, rabbits are in short supply in the northern part of the state.

Grouse are showing up a little more prominently in the mountains than they did about this time last year. Reproduction was fair, and like quail, the grouse had good weather to hatch their eggs and raise their young.

A certain amount of mystery enshrouds the grouse and his reproductive cycles. Records seem to indicate these birds reach a peak in population approximately every 10 years. Midway between the peaks, the birds appear to crease in numbers to a low point. Over the last season or two, Georgia grouse seem to be moving along the upswing side of the cycle.

The farther south you travel in Georgia, the better rabbit hunting you can find . . . and ironically, the less popu-

lar the bunny is to local hunters.

Biologists say there was a very good crop of young quail last spring, and weather conditions were suitable so that a higher percentage of the baby birds were apparently able to survive the rigors of nature. High winds and heavy rains or sudden cold snaps can do a great deal of damage to numbers of tiny birds when clutches of eggs are first hatched. Food supplies also seem to have been good enough to raise plenty of healthy youngsters.

Food was expected to be a little less plentiful for the squirrels. Mast — acorns, nuts and similar squirrel foods — appears to be somewhat spotty and scattered, particularly in north Georgia. However, a fine mast crop last year produced a good number of young squirrels.

It's a little harder to find land that is open enough for good quail populations and good shooting. Naturally, best quail hunting is down south, where habitat and climate are more suitable. Yet, it appears that north Georgians should have at least as good a year as they've been accustomed to in the past, and perhaps a little better.

For example, the Whitesburg Public Hunting Area in Carroll and Douglas counties seems to have a good supply of birds this season, and even in fairly heavily wooded country, in the Cartersville area, birds seem to be more plentiful than usual. The Allatoona Public Hunting Area may be improved somewhat for quail hunting this year. The Whitesburg, Allatoona, Altamaha (except Butler Island), and Seminole public hunting areas are open for all small game in season, at no charge. Hunters are not required to check in or out.

Managed small game hunts are as follows:

Dec. 2 and 3, 9 and 10, 16 and 17,

and 23 and 24, hunting for grouse, quail, squirrel and rabbits permitted at Blue Ridge, Chattahoochee, and Cedar Creek. Clark Hill is open on these dates except on Dec. 9 and 10, when that area is closed. Grouse hunting only at Blue Ridge and Chattahoochee, quail only at Cedar Creek and Clark Hill.

Dec. 5-17, Grouse, squirrel and rabbit hunting permitted at Swallow Creek and Coleman River.

Dec. 12-17, and Jan. 9-14, quail, squirrel and rabbit hunting permitted at Bullard Creek.

Jan 2-28, quail, squirrel and rabbit hunting permitted at Suwanoochee.

Jan 23-28, quail, squirrel, and rabbit hunting permitted at Arabia Bay.

Jan 30-Feb. 4, quail, squirrel, and rabbit hunting permitted at Waycross State Forest Area.

Hunting for small game in season is permitted each Wednesday and Saturday at Piedmont Experiment Station between the dates of Dec. 3 and Jan. 21.

Duck hunts at Butler Island, by reservation only, are permitted each Tuesday and Saturday in season.

A fee of \$1 per day for small game hunts is charged at these areas: Blue Ridge, Chattahoochee, Chestatee, Lake Burton, Cedar Creek, Clark Hill, and Bullard Creek. Duck hunts at Butler Island are for a \$5 fee. No charge is made and no permit is required at all other areas open for small game hunts.

All these things point to a good year for all holders of a Georgia hunting license. There's a good variety for all, suiting every personal taste, and near at hand for nearly everyone. And the budget doesn't undergo as much strain as for a weeklong deer hunt. Yet, in the pot, there is a dish awaiting that is a delight to the palate.

The Wildlife Ranger

Mark Trail of The Mounties

By Jim Morrison

Protecting Georgia's wildlife resources night and day isn't half as glamorous a job for wildlife ranger Wayne Dunn of Marietta as many people think it is. Thanks to the license increase, he's better equipped than ever before to do a good job.



Just for a moment, imagine yourself as a wildlife ranger: a combination of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Mark Trail, sleeping out nights under the stars in a sleeping bag, paddling a canoe over raging rapids, stopping the mad onslaught of a huge black bear with a single bullet, and subsisting on wild berries and reptiles, or freshly caught trout, all the while ignoring the wistful look in the eye of ordinary hunters and fishermen, as well as the beautiful women dying to take you away from it all.

But the plain hard facts are that the wildlife ranger has a difficult job that is sometimes dangerous and frequently is unrewarding, often with long hours and unpleasant working conditions.

If you are a wildlife ranger, you know that a fisherman or boater never gets lost when it's warm or the sun is shining . . . just at night or on the coldest, wettest, and most miserable day of the year. Often, it's your job to find the body of a drowned person, watched from the shore by the distraught eyes of wives or mothers. You are the man who is cursed by the over-limit hunter you have just arrested. You are the man who finds your truck with four flat tires where you left it in the woods, or whose patrol boat is burned and sunk during the night. You are the man who feels the cold steel of a high-powered rifle held at your back, or who knows that sting of birdshot peppering your face at close range.

You are the man who is the fisherman's friend, who knows where they're biting and on what, who knows of a good place to hunt, and who plays a big role in seeing that it stays that way. You're a wildlife ranger. It's your job, and you wouldn't have any other one. And you're one of the big reasons Georgia sportsmen don't mind paying a dollar a year more for the wonderful privilege of hunting and fishing for the wildlife you are protecting.

What did the license increase do for wildlife conservation law enforcement? One of the most important benefits was to immediately provide 21 new wildlife rangers, bringing the total number of enforcement officers in the State to 151 men, including district chiefs and game management area managers who frequently patrol outside their areas.

This increase in the patrol forces has reduced the average area patrolled by one ranger before the license increase from 500 square miles a man to less than 388 square miles each today. Although additional men may be needed in the future to meet increasing hunt-

ing, fishing and boating pressures in some localities, for the most part the Game and Fish Commission now for the first time has an adequate number of men for the job.

In addition, these men are now well equipped and well uniformed, with new vehicles and patrol boats which are more economical to operate and maintain, as well as safer and more effective in operation against law violators who are quite often well armed, determined to escape, and traveling in powerful, fast automobiles.

Since April 1, the Commission has purchased 64 pickup trucks and 39 boats, both as original equipment for new personnel and to replace old, worn-out equipment.

With license increase funds, it was possible to have a State-wide training school for all Department personnel for the first time in three years to present the new Department policy manual. The manual for the first time sets out the rules, policies, and procedures to be used by rangers throughout the entire state in game and fish management, law enforcement, and public relations.

That these improvements in the ranger force were vitally necessary is clearly shown by the increase in hunters and fishermen licensed in Georgia,

jumping from 222,000 in 1950 to 759,000 in 1964. From 1964-65 to 1965-66 alone, the number of registered motorboats jumped 12 per cent from 58,000 to more than 65,000, with an estimated total of all boats of 106,000.

Georgia's wildlife rangers have one of the biggest jobs in conserving our State's wildlife . . . enforcement of wildlife conservation laws and regulations. Their job frequently is not an easy one. Although intended to be humorous, this contribution by an anonymous writer contains a lot of serious thoughts about the job of the wildlife ranger, or "game warden" as he is universally known:



Modern new patrol boats like this one skippered by ranger Jim Farris of Forsyth on Lake Lanier will help the State Game and Fish Commission step up water safety efforts on Georgia's busy lakes and streams.

Many species of wildlife, such as the wild turkey, would soon become extinct without stringent enforcement of conservation laws. Columbus hunter Dan Self probably would never have bagged this trophy without the protection it received from ranger chief Lewis Cotton of Manchester and his wildlife rangers.

What Makes a Good Game Warden

A Game Warden must be neat and a diplomat, and must be able to settle differences between boaters and fishermen to each person's satisfaction.

If he is neat, he's conceited. If he is careless, he's a bum. If he's pleasant, he's a flirt. If he's brief, he's a grouch.

He must make instant decisions that an attorney will take weeks or even months, to defend.

If he hurries, he overlooks things. If he takes his time, he's lazy. If you get caught, he had it in for you. If he's energetic, he's trying to impress somebody. If he's deliberate, he's too slow to catch a cold.

He must be an expert in First Aid, must arrive first at the scene of the accident, make a diagnosis of the victim's condition; start breathing, stop bleeding, apply splints to broken bones and send the injured home with scarcely a limp.

He must be an athlete able to subdue men twice his size and half his age, without damage to himself or his uniform without using undue force.

If you strike him, he's a coward. If he strikes you back, he's a bully. If you see him first, he's a bonehead.

If he makes a good catch, he's lucky. If he gets promoted, he's got pull. If he doesn't, Aw what's the use?

He must be a minister, a social worker, etc.

Last, but not least, he must be economical. He must be able to live on what a game warden makes.



Finning quietly in the clear water, largemouth bass occasionally rolled an eye at the people peering in, for instance Judi Townsend of Atlanta.

800,000 Busy Eyes

By Jim Tyler

Lost in his own world of discovery, a young lad intently watches a diamond-back rattlesnake.



Bambi the deer was there along with his girl friend Faline. Flower, the skunk, was there. And as nature is not all composed of cute animals, the wise old owl glared from big eyes. An ugly old mud turtle looked about.

Georgia wildlife was on exhibit for the nearly 400,000 people who visited the Southeastern Fair in Atlanta.

Looking over this "herd" of wildlife was Game and Fish Ranger Arthur Abernathy. Arthur spends three to four months each year making it possible for Georgians to see their wildlife in the flesh. He captures many of the animals himself. You should see him handle a snake. Or gently handle a fawn.

Some of the animals exhibited were not too lively. Onlookers had to take a long look to realize that some of the animals were not just holding a pose. They have been set in very life-looking scenes by Joe Hurt, State Museum Taxidermist.

The Southeastern Fair, like most fairs, was crammed with hurly burly activity. People laughed. People shouted. People enjoyed themselves. Yet, thank

goodness, the original characters of a fair were still there, and enjoyed — the cows, the pigs, the blue ribbons — although the teeming midway dominated.

But this was a 20th century fair, with 20th century people. Even common animals were not common to all.

"See the cow, children," a woman excitedly points to the pens.

"A cow, whoopee!"

The family moves along to the Game and Fish exhibit where animals not commonly seen were to be found.

"Oh, children, look here, it's Bambi."

"Bambi!!"

The kids get all gushy over Bambi. Pop looks at the swimming catfish and bream, eyes the mounted record bass. He points out a red fox to Mom. Mom feels the excitement of the children, and gives an involuntary shudder as the kids move on to storm the snake cages.

It's too late to do anything about it this year, but come out next year and join the "busy eyes" at the Southeastern Fair.

P.S. Be sure and visit us.

Bambi and the game keeper (Ranger Arthur Abernathy), strike a pose at the Southeastern Fair.



meet your commissioner:

CHARLES DAVIDSON, JR.

Charles Davidson Jr. represents the 4th Congressional District in the conservation and development of Georgia's wildlife resources.



By Jim Tyler



Commissioner Davidson and his wife, Cile, strike a pose while examining an 11 point, 300 pound mule deer he shot while hunting in Wyoming.

Commissioner Charles Davidson Jr. of the fourth Congressional District represents a metropolitan area . . . DeKalb-Atlanta, a sprawling black veined giant that forever reaches out and devours chunks of the countryside. The earth is remolded for urban living, trees toppled, buildings erected — and the giant spreads, cancerlike.

These people, the people caught up in the tremendous expansion of cities,

Granite is Davidson's business. "Scotch on the Rocks" is a term coined to depict his Scottish family and their granite business.



whether they be of Atlanta, Augusta, or Macon, are a special concern to Commissioner Davidson. Where will they hunt? Where will they fish?

"The only answer for the city people is game management areas managed by the State Game and Fish Commission," the Commissioner says with thought. "My boys are 9, 12, and 14, and live in Avondale Estates, a suburb of Atlanta. They want to get out and shoot that gun, fish a little. So do the other city boys. It's my concern to provide them with a place to go."

Records show that about 221,000 acres in Georgia were under the Game and Fish Commission management area program when he became a Commissioner in 1959. The acreage has shot up to include almost 900,000 acres today. Now serving his second appointment as a commissioner, Davidson says assuredly, "This is just a start."

The motive behind his effort in making it possible for others, the city fellow, to have a place to hunt and to fish probably stems from his deep satisfaction with the outdoors. Commissioner Davidson leads the sportsman's dream, usually accompanied by his absolutely beautiful wife, Cile. Off the coast of lower California he has hooked and felt the tremendous muscle of the mighty marlin. He has reeled in a thrashing Pacific sailfish from the salt water of Mexico. And just recently, in Wyoming, he brought down a mule deer that measured 161½ points (green measurement, antlers not dried) under Boone and Crockett specifications, a trophy he is more than pleased with.

In Georgia, quail hunting is his favorite sport, but he admits that two-thirds of the thrill is watching the dogs work. This leads into another aspect of his enjoyment of the outdoors . . . shooting with a camera. Squeezing the camera trigger has been his hobby for some time, and many excellent photos are the result. There is more than one way to bag wildlife.

Granite is his business. The Davidson family owns a tremendous granite concern, probably the largest diversified granite business in the country. The Davidson dynasty, dubbed "Scotch on the Rocks" by Atlanta Journal and Constitution writer Willard Neal, was started 80 years back by the Commissioner's grandfather, a stonecutter from Scotland who settled in Lithonia to continue his trade.

Within this family owned enterprise, the dynamic 38-year-old businessman serves as Vice-President of Davidson Granite Company; Stone Mountain Grit Company; Atlanta, Stone Mountain and Lithonia Railroad; and president of Ben Hill Development Corp.

Three years ago, in his first term on the Commission, he was chairman during a major administrative change within the Game and Fish Department. He took the leading role in urging a reorganization of department leadership and joined with Governor Carl Sanders and the other 10 commissioners in asking for a study by the Governor's Commission for Efficiency and Improvement in Government. "I felt it was up to me to stand up and take the position of the proverb my father raised me by, 'truth wins out,'" Davidson said.

A study was made — the Bowdoin Report. The department was looked at critically and subsequently reorganized. Wildlife biologists were placed in many key administrative positions.

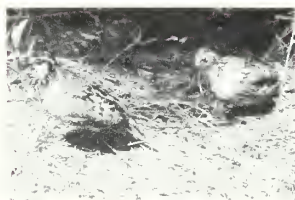
Commissioner Davidson continues to fight for what he thinks is right and tempers his judgment by listening with an open mind to what the professionals, the biologists, have to say, before he makes a decision. He is progressive, and young thinking — a definite asset to the Commission.

His philosophy on being a commissioner: "There is such a short time in life to enjoy what you like, and this was my opportunity to do something for the hunter and fisherman."

(In the November Issue of *Game & Fish*, the decline of quail habitat in Georgia due to declining farming and increasing woodland was described. This is the second and final article of the series.)

Part Two

The Quail Capital Of The World



By Jin Morrison

Most observers predict that this rapid increase in timberland will level off somewhat in the next few years, but it is still surprising to think that more than two-thirds of Georgia's 37 million acres is covered by woodlands.

How strange that seems is shown by a story to the effect that when Columbus discovered America, a squirrel could hop all the way from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River from tree to tree without ever even touching the ground. Now, he could only make it by hopping from billboard to billboard! But when we consider the facts of the matter, our furry friend might make it all the way to the Mississippi on trees again, if he doesn't get flattened by a semi-trailer crossing the Interstate!

Looking back to the days when that squirrel's jumping trees began to be thinned out, I'd be willing to wager that there were some dyed-in-the-wool turkey, squirrel, and deer hunters around who couldn't understand what had happened to "the good old days," even though the world's finest quail hunting had replaced their forest game.

But rapidly increasing timberland is not the only threat to Georgia's quail hunting in future years. Much of the remaining open land is now devoted to pastures for dairy and beef cattle, rather than for cultivation of crops. Grasslands are only slightly more productive of quail than forests.

How does this great increase in forests and grasslands threaten quail? The answer lies in the food and nesting habits of the bobwhite, a ground bird that relies primarily on highly nutritious weed seeds for his existence, along with some insects. Adapted for scratching and pecking in short grass and weeds, the quail is not large enough or strong enough to turn over heavy leaves in the forest to eat acorns, as the wild turkey does. He also must have more and better seeds to eat than are found in the usual pasture.

On the other hand, cultivation of even non-edible seed crops such as cotton stimulates the production of choice quail food weeds in the disturbed field area, growing in rows between or under the plants, at the edge of plowed fields, in fence rows and gullies, on terraces, and other protected spots, especially when the crops are too tall to plow between. Frequently, these crops are heavily fertilized, producing heavier numbers of highly nutritious weed seed preferred by quail such as Johnson weed, ragweed, foxtails, and crabgrass.

In addition, quail benefit from cultivated small grain crops, such as corn, millet, milo, rice, oats, and barley.

But unfortunately for the bobwhite, and for the quail hunter, agriculture of this type has declined sharply in Georgia during the past thirty years, and shows no signs of ever returning to the days when cotton was king, and so was the quail, as Georgia's favorite game species.

But, as quail habitat declines into woods, it becomes more suitable for deer, turkeys, and squirrel. Quail, doves, and to a lesser extent rabbits, all become less numerous.

This pattern is indicated by the fact that deer are now found in all of the 159 Georgia counties, with a deer season in 85 counties this year. Soon, every county will be open. During a three year period, the total number of Georgia deer hunters jumped from 86,000 during the 1962-63 season to more than 113,000 deer hunters in the 1964-65 season. At the same time, the number of deer they bagged shot upwards from 13,100 to almost 21,000 deer.

During the same period, the number of quail hunters only remained constant at approximately 135,000, while the total number of hunters in Georgia increased. The quail bag dropped off from more than four million birds in 1962-63 to less than 3,400,000 birds in 1964-65. The figure is still quite respectable, even though it is declining slowly.

What is the answer to halting the decline? There isn't an easy answer, because quail, like all forms of wildlife, increase or decrease with the suitability of their habitat. Man is the only creature capable of managing that habitat to suit himself, by clearing and cultivation, burning, deliberate seeding of grass or tree seedlings, or simply allowing the land to reseed itself naturally and grow up.

In all but the few cases of extremely wealthy landowners, the land normally will be put into the most profitable use that can be found for it, regardless of the effect on wildlife, including quail. At the present time, cultivation beneficial to quail is becoming largely economically unfeasible, while cattle raising and timber production offer profits with less effort than cultivation. No amount of money spent by a State wildlife conservation agency could stop this trend. It would be easier to sweep the Atlantic Ocean back with a broom.

Currently, some governmental officials are discussing plans for America to "feed the world" by dramatically increasing the production of soybeans through government programs which would put much idle land back into production. If this ever occurred on a massive scale, then quail hunting

might again become the predominant Georgia game species.

But, there are a few things that can be done to preserve reasonably good quail hunting, even on lands that are not in cultivation. But even these take more effort and expense than the average landowner is willing to go to, unless he is interested in good quail hunting, usually only for himself and his family.

One of the best of these practices is controlled burning of woodlands, including both mature hardwoods and pines, after they reach a sufficient height to prevent low-lying limbs from catching fire off the ground and destroying entire trees with a "crown" fire. A slow, "cool" fire set against the wind in the late winter on humid, low wind days, is an effective force in removing unproductive brush. After the fire, regrowth of annual weeds and legumes highly preferred by quail and wildlife, such as beggarweed, is stimulated. Without the competition of woody, brushy plants, these native quail foods grow rapidly. If permitted, grazing should be light.

Food patches are more expensive than controlled burning, but can be justified if kept small in size, usually from one-eighth to one-half acre for quail, especially the lespedezas.

Other helpful practices include selective timber cutting to provide openings in woods to stimulate weed growth. On cultivated areas, so-called "clean" farming practices should be avoided, including burning off fence-rows, gullies, and other edge areas which serve as cover for wildlife. Quail populations are highest on areas where the four types of habitat they require come together most often: forests, brush, grass, and cultivated areas. Quail must have some of all four types of areas to prosper. Forests and short grass provide nesting cover, and cultivated areas provide food.

Undoubtedly, one of the greatest problems now facing the quail hunter, and most other types of hunters, is the problem of finding a place where he has permission to hunt. Since quail usually aren't present in high density, most landowners who hunt themselves guard their quail like gold nuggets, to be reserved for themselves, their family, friends, and neighbors to hunt. Permission to hunt probably can be secured more readily for almost all other game species.

Efforts of the State Game and Fish Commission to solve this problem by securing public quail hunting lands have not been very successful, for several very good reasons. Quail are most common on farmland, which is usually

in small tracts of less than a thousand acres, which is too small for much public use if good hunting is to be maintained. In addition, the landowner usually lives on the land and prefers to limit hunting on it to a small number of people. He is troubled by a large number of people wandering on his land, sometimes leaving gates open for valuable cattle to wander off, breaking down fence wires and posts, and perhaps peppering livestock or littering his property.

The Game and Fish Commission has attempted to lease quail land, but so far, only industrial timber companies and public land in the National Forests and a few other areas have been leased to the Commission. These are primarily forest areas, with little or no quail hunting. This picture is not likely to change in the near future, since only timber companies own large acreages that can stand public hunting, that do not have the owner living there to hunt or be bothered by hunters, and who would prefer assistance from the State Game and Fish Commission in controlling hunters and preventing forest fires and vandalism.

Some of these areas do have quail hunting at least as good as on most overgrown areas, but it's not the gentleman's bird shooting of "the good old days" that could be readily hunted walking or from a wagon or on horseback. Hunters willing to work can still produce quail from these public areas. Why more hunters don't take advantage of these opportunities is a mystery.

Stocking of pen-raised quail in forest or other areas is not the solution, as shown by many research projects in which banded birds were released in the spring or summer for fall shooting. Returns of banded birds by hunters have seldom exceeded three per cent of the birds released, usually considerable expense to the ill-informed hunter. Pen-raised quail do about as well as canaries turned loose in the wild to fend for themselves.

Stocking wild trapped quail isn't the answer either, because there are so many wild quail by the millions now present all over the state in the native brood stock. If an area has suitable habitat for quail, birds move into the area naturally. When trapped and moved to an area of poor food, such as a forest, the birds are quite capable of beating the trapper back to their original home! This principle is proven by the fact that research projects have shown that when every last quail is killed out of a covey, a new covey of birds will appear in the same location year after year, if the habitat is still suitable.

Quail feeders aren't the answer either. These artificial devices are not only expensive to operate, but they lose a high percentage of their food to pests like rats and mice, squirrels, chipmunks, etc. while concentrating quail predators, such as hawks, owls, and snakes, and bringing the quail together in such close contact helps spread disease.

On the other hand, elimination of predators like foxes and hawks has little effect on quail, which have survived in high numbers for thousands of years with no predator control at all. Most predators take more undesirable species like rats and mice than they do game birds and animals.

No gathering of quail hunters would be complete without some comment being made about the "good old days" when quail were fat and chunky. Now, they say, the birds are small and wild. "Mexican quail," we are told, have inbred with the "good ole" bobwhites of our youth. However, scientific investigation has failed to show any such decline of bobwhite size. Game biologists state flatly that quail brought from Mexico in the late 40's have now apparently all died out because of the difference in habitat of Mexico and Georgia.

As to the wild characteristics of bobwhites, the game biologists once again feel that the barbershop biologist is mostly off base when he claims that quail have changed. They say that the birds haven't changed — but the habitat has. Birds that held still in open farmland areas until being flushed underfoot don't have to wait to fly in thick brush or "swamps" where they can run and escape danger as easily as flying.

The biologists say that some quail have always been found in "the swamps" and in thick places, but no one hunted them because of the difficulty. Now, the thick places are getting thicker and more numerous. Because these memories of "the good old days" never seem to include the days when we walked miles and hardly got a shot, it's probably inevitable that "things'll never be as good as they used to be."

But to be more practical about it, quail hunting or farm game hunting is for those that prepare for it, either with a little extra effort, extra expense, or both. Georgia's magnificent quail hunting on cultivated areas will always be good, in spite of what happens elsewhere. But with controlled burning in forest areas and food patches around pastures, the dedicated hunter can insure that on his property, at least, Georgia will always be "the Quail Capital of the World."

CONSERVATION CRUSADERS

Georgia Sportsmen meet in Macon • By Glen Smith

Fair treatment of Georgia's 100,000 motorboat owners in the distribution of gasoline fuel taxes has been urged by the Georgia Sportsmen's Federation.

Meeting at their annual convention in Macon, the group adopted a resolution calling for a constitutional amendment to earmark taxes on motorboat fuels for construction of boat launching ramps and other boating programs. It has been estimated that two and one half per cent of the gasoline taxes in Georgia comes from motorboating. At present, all such taxes are earmarked for highway construction only.

The other major resolution approved by the convention concerned the growing problem of strip mining throughout the state. It specifically calls for legislation allowing the state to issue permits to strip miners after they post a performance bond. Strip miners would also be required to reclaim the land they mine when they have completed their operations.

During the convention, the group heard reports on the activities of the State Game and Fish Commission from Director Rosser Malone and assistant directors Jack Crockford and Howard Zeller. Other speakers included Charles Kelly, game and fish chief of the Alabama Department of Conservation.

New officers were chosen for the next four years. Elected president was James L. Adams of Tucker. Executive vice president will be Clyde Greenway, also of Tucker. The secretary-treasurer will be Phillip Ham of Forsyth.

Vice presidents serving eight of the state's ten congressional districts were also chosen. They are: Felton Mikell of Statesboro, First District; Bill Jones



Outgoing president Tommie Holliman of Thomaston, right, congratulates new Georgia Sportsmen's Federation president Jim Adams of Tucker, center, and secretary-treasurer Phillip Ham of Forsyth.

of Albany, Second District; Jessie Miller of Richland, Third District; J.W.K. Holliday of Atlanta, Fourth District; Dave Green of Macon, Sixth District; Frank Atwood of Cartersville, Seventh District; Lewis Raulerson of Haylow, Eighth District; and Don Huey of Canton, Ninth District.

At its awards banquet, the Federation presented a number of trophies to individuals and groups for outstanding achievements in conservation during the last year.

Dr. Phillip Greear, chairman of the Department of Biology at Shorter College in Rome, and Dr. Clyde Connell, chairman of the Department of Biology at Valdosta State College were cited as Conservation Educators of the Year for their leadership in two new Natural Resource Use workshops.

The Legislative Conservationist of the Year is George Busbee, representa-

tive from Dougherty County. As Administration Floor Leader, Mr. Busbee was cited for his support of the hunting and fishing license increase bill passed during the last session of the Legislature, which provided the State Game and Fish Commission with a one million dollar budget increase.

Other awards went to: Tommy Boren of Bibb County, Youth Conservationist of the Year and Youth Conservationist of the Sixth District; Steve Phillips of DeKalb County, Youth Conservationist of the Fourth District; the Southeast Bulloch F.F.A. Chapter of Brooklet, First District; Dr. Ralph K. Tyson, Dean of Students at Georgia Southern College, Wildlife Conservationist of the Year; Mr. B. Fred Statham, Soil Conservationist of the Year; Mr. Trammel Carmichael of Cherokee County, Water Conservationist of the Year; Mr. Harvey Brown, Forest Conservationist of the Year; Mr. James Avery Lee, Farm Director of WMAZ in Macon, Conservation Communications Award of the Year; Mr. Bob C. Smith of the Towaliga Soil and Water Conservation District, Conservation Organization of the Year; Mr. Malcolm Edwards, Outstanding Vice President of the Georgia Sportsman's Federation; The Bulloch County Sportsmen's Club, Outstanding Sportsmen's Club.

The Governor's Award for Conservationist of the Year went to Jeff Owens, the area conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service, for his work in the Piedmont and Towaliga Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Present at the Convention were 300 delegates representing 43 affiliated clubs with 4,300 members.

From left to right, President Adams with Dr. Clyde Connell, Valdosta, Doy Boyd, Statesboro, and Dr. Phillip Greear, Rome. Connell and Greear were joint recipients of the conservation educator of the year award; Boyd is president of the Bulloch County Sportsmen's Club, judged outstanding club of the year.



Sportsman's



Calendar

SEASONS NOW OPEN

GUN DEER SEASON

Southeast Ga. Season—Oct. 29, 1966 through Jan. 5, 1967 in the following counties:

Brantley, Bryan, Bulloch, Burke, Camden, Candler, Charlton, Chatham, Clinch County south of the Atlantic Coastline Railroad and east of the run of Suwannee Creek, Echols County east of U. S. 129 and south of Ga. 187, Effingham, Emanuel north of U. S. 80, Evans, Glascock, Glynn, Jefferson, Jenkins, Liberty, Long, McIntosh, Pierce County south of U. S. 82 and east of Ga. 121, Screven, Tattnall, Washington and Wayne counties.

Bag Limit—Two (2) Bucks. Hunting with dogs is allowed in all of the above counties.

GROUSE, RUFFED

Season—Oct. 15, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

Bag Limit—3 Daily, possession limit 6.

SQUIRREL

Season—Oct. 15, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

Bag Limit—10 Daily.

OPOSSUM

Season—Oct. 29, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967. Exception: Coweta County opens Oct. 1, 1966 through Jan. 21, 1967.

No Bag Limit.

RACCOON

N. Ga. Season—Oct. 29, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

Bag Limit—One (1) per night per person.

S. Ga. Season—No closed season.

No Bag Limit.

GUN DEER SEASON

Southwest Ga. Season—Nov. 5, 1966 through Jan. 5, 1967 in the following counties:

Baker, Calhoun, Chattahoochee, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Lee County west of U. S. 19, Marion, Mitchell, Muscogee, Seminole, Stewart, Terrell, Thomas, Webster and Worth County south of U. S. 2.

Bag Limit—Two (2) Bucks, except in Baker, Calhoun, Grady, Dougherty, and

Thomas counties where the bag limit is two (2) bucks or one (1) buck and one (1) doe. Exception: The Worth County bag limit shall be one (1) buck only for the season.

Hunting with dogs will be allowed in all of the counties listed above during the season with the exception of Chattahoochee, Muscogee, and Worth counties, where hunting with dogs will be prohibited in order to prevent over-harvest of deer and to insure continued growth of the deer herd.

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WILD TURKEY

West Central Ga. Season—Nov. 5, 1966 through Jan. 5, 1967 in the counties of Chattahoochee, Marion, Muscogee, Stewart, and Talbot.

Bag Limit—One (1) per season.

Southwest Ga. Season—Nov. 19, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967 in the counties of Baker, Calhoun, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Miller, Mitchell, Seminole, and Thomas.

Bag Limit—Two (2) per season.

QUAIL, BOBWHITE

Season—Nov. 19, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

Bag Limit—12 Daily, possession limit 36.

RABBITS

Season—Nov. 19, 1966 through Feb. 28, 1967.

N. Ga. Bag Limit—5 Daily.

S. Ga. Bag Limit—10 Daily.

GEESE

Season—Nov. 7, 1966 through January 15, 1967.

Bag Limit—2 daily, possession limit 4. See federal regulations. Migratory stamp required. Liberty and McIntosh counties closed.

DUCKS, MERGANSERS, AND COOTS

Season—Nov. 24, 1966 through January 7, 1967.

Bag Limit—Ducks: 4 daily, including no more than 2 wood ducks or 2 canvasbacks. Possession limit 8, including no more than 4 wood ducks or 4 canvasbacks. Mergansers: 5 daily, including no more than 1 hooded merganser. Possession limit is 10, including no more than 2 hooded mergansers. Coots: 10 daily, possession limit is 20. See federal waterfowl regulations available with the required \$3.00 federal migratory bird (duck) stamp at all main U. S. Post Offices. State regulations for waterfowl hunting are the same as the federal regulations.

SEASONS OPENING THIS MONTH

WILD TURKEY

Southeast Ga. Season—Dec. 1, 1966 through Jan. 5, 1967 in the counties of Brantley, Bryan, Bulloch, Camden, Charlton, Chatham, Effingham, Evans, Glynn, Liberty, Long, McIntosh, Pierce, Screven, Tattnall, and Wayne.

Bag Limit—One (1) turkey gobbler per season. Hens are protected.

WOODCOCK

Season—Dec. 12 through Jan. 30, 1967.

Bag Limit—5 Daily, possession limit 10. See federal regulations.

DOVES

Season—Dec. 6 through Jan. 14.

Bag Limit—12 daily, possession limit 24.

SEASONS CLOSING THIS MONTH

NONE

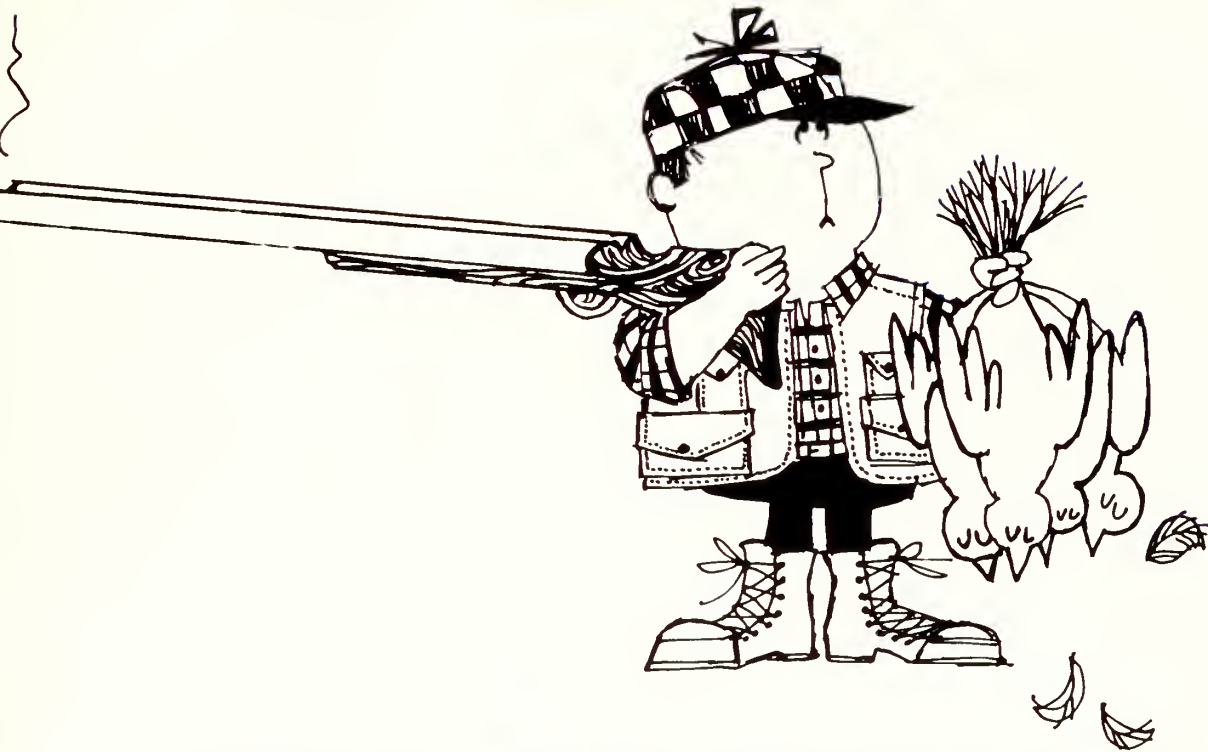
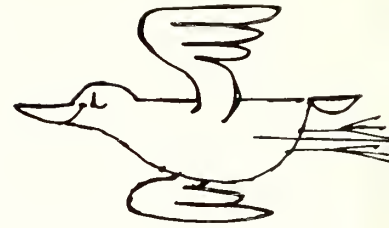
SEASONS OPENING NEXT MONTH

NONE



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